

The Nation and The Athenæum

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

MR. ASQUITH'S speech at Brighton last week at the annual meeting of the National Liberal Federation was an admirable overture to the forthcoming Liberal campaign. The efforts of Liberals, he suggested, should be concentrated in the immediate future in two main directions: (1) Security of livelihood; and (2) the development of national production, and of both national and Imperial wealth. The first object was to be achieved by "co-ordination and completion of social insurance against the risks—of sickness, accident, unemployment, old age, widowhood—of industrial life." It was, however, "in the opening up of fresh fields for production and employment, and in the more economic and fruitful development both of our national and Imperial resources, that the only effective and lasting remedy" for our social ills was to be found. Doubtless those who have fed with avidity upon the imposing but sterile formulae of Socialism will find such a policy limited and uninspiring; but we believe that a concentration of attention upon practicable but far-reaching remedies for the real social evils of the day is precisely what the country needs.

On the question of Liberal unity, Mr. Asquith spoke with characteristic humour and good-humour.

"Our reunited party," he said, "is working together with the utmost cordiality and good comradeship. I cannot sufficiently acknowledge my own personal obligations to Mr. Lloyd George for his constant co-operation both in counsel and debate. There have been occasions when we have not all voted in the same lobby. When has that not been the case with the Liberal Party, and particularly with a Liberal Party in Opposition? We have never attained to the ideal of mechanical discipline described in the French song:—

Quand un gendarme rit,
Tous les gendarmes rient,
Dans la gendarmerie."

In my salad days, even under the austere and appalling frown of Mr. Gladstone himself, I myself have been an occasional mutineer. As for Mr. Lloyd George, he has been in his time a super-mutineer—almost, I might say, a professional. There is no lack of real essential unity in our Parliamentary Party, though its appearance may from time to time be now and again disguised either by the unbending honesty or the momentary vagaries of this individual or that."

This essential unity received what Mr. Asquith once termed "variegated expression" during the week at Brighton in the speeches of Mr. Lloyd George, who retorted vigorously upon Mr. Baldwin's claim to a Conservative monopoly of Imperial wisdom; Lord Grey, who gave ungrudging support to Mr. MacDonald's foreign policy, and Sir John Simon, who opened the discussion on an extended insurance policy.

The new Reichstag met for the first time on Tuesday, the Cabinet having resigned a few hours before. To the former event little importance attaches. It was characterized chiefly by noisy recriminations between Nationalists and Communists. The Cabinet crisis, on the other hand, may affect the fate not of Germany only but of all Europe. Dr. Marx's resignation was due to his failure to negotiate a Coalition in which the Nationalists would have a place. All accommodation with the Junker class seems impossible. They put forward von Tirpitz as their nominee for Chancellor, and refuse to give any clear indication as to where they stand on such vital questions as the Dawes Report and the maintenance of the Republic. Whether this refusal to co-operate on reasonable terms in the business of government will in the end prove a misfortune remains to be seen. Immediately on his resignation Dr. Marx was invited by President Ebert to resume his endeavours to form an administration. Whether he, or someone else, takes up the task the new Chancellor will naturally look to the Left instead of the Right. The Democrats and the People's Party are his nucleus, and the adhesion of the Socialists (in or out of the Government) and the Centre ought not to be impossible to secure. That should provide the material for a sound working Government. The Dawes scheme is, of course, the dominant question. If Germany were to raise obstacles to the scheme, she would run the risk of putting world opinion against her. President Ebert and Dr. Marx know that well, and rather than capitulate to the Nationalists on such a point they will almost certainly risk new elections.

At Düsseldorf and in other occupied regions fresh arrests and requisitions are being made, evoking severe

criticism even in France itself, and emphasizing the danger, that we have stressed, that the intransigence of French generals may go far to frustrate a more liberal influence at the Quai d'Orsay. That M. Herriot means to strike a different note is made clear from the statements both he and M. Painlevé have been giving freely to both French and foreign papers, which at least contrast favourably with the honeyed obduracy of M. Poincaré's last love-letters to Mr. MacDonald. But M. Herriot is not yet Prime Minister, and when he does accept office he will find himself faced with difficulties which there is no purpose in minimizing. The franc has gone again above 80, a development for which supporters of the Poincaré régime may be in part responsible—not, of course, by deliberate sabotage, but by withdrawing some of the support that has hitherto been forthcoming. With M. Herriot and his probable colleagues pledged to abandon some of the more drastic of the taxation measures forced through by M. Poincaré, new methods of solving the financial problem must be devised. Simultaneously a constitutional crisis may have to be faced, for the Socialists, and a good many of the Radicals, are resolved to get M. Millerand out of the Elysée, installing M. Painlevé there in his place. With the best will in the world, therefore, M. Herriot may find his hands too full to tackle external problems comprehensively for some weeks to come.

We go to press before the result is known of Thursday's debate on the motion to reduce the Minister of Labour's salary. But, whatever the result may be, it is clear that the Government stand in greater danger of a defeat that would precipitate a political crisis than on any previous occasion since they took office. It is paradoxical that this should be so; for, though the Government have not been conspicuously resourceful in dealing with unemployment, few of their critics suppose that their shortcomings, judged by any reasonable standard, are at all glaring. The brunt of the attack, indeed, is directed not against what Mr. Shaw in office has done or failed to do, but against what his colleagues, before they came into office, claimed that they would do. These claims were so definite and so extravagant that the Government inevitably cut a sorry figure in trying to explain them away. But it is possible to expose the hollowness of past Labour pretensions without seeking to turn the Government out. The Conservative insistence on pressing their vote of censure, and the Liberal reluctance to oppose it, mark, in truth, an important development in the Parliamentary situation. The Conservative attitude towards the Government seems now to have passed definitely from benevolent tolerance into fighting opposition. This makes close co-operation between the Liberal and Labour Parties an essential condition of the Government's existence. But meanwhile the relations between the two parties are becoming more and more unfriendly, and Liberals are growing less and less disposed to rally to the support of the Government when its general record is assailed. In these circumstances, the chances of a long life for the Government or for the present Parliament are not bright.

The results of the by-elections in West Toxteth and Kelvingrove tend to cancel each other out, and they are not, therefore, of much assistance to the political augur who seeks signs of the direction in which public opinion is moving. Local and personal lessons, however, can be drawn from them. The conception of Liverpool as a Conservative stronghold can now be definitely abandoned, for the swing to the Left which resulted in the loss of three Tory seats last year is

clearly continuing. On the other hand, the extreme wing of the Labour Party has suffered a reverse on its own happy hunting-ground in Glasgow. The fact that the Labour candidate was an avowed Communist obviously helped to swell the Conservative majority; and it may well be that the result was not displeasing to the majority of the Cabinet. The Labour Party is a commodious institution; but it is difficult even for it to reconcile an indignant repudiation of Communism with the adoption of Communists as official party candidates. It should be noted that the Labour candidate in West Toxteth was supported by the local Liberals, while in Kelvingrove many of the Liberals seem to have deserted their own candidate in favour of Captain Elliot, in order the more effectively to oppose the Labour nominee. Glasgow, we fear, is most infertile ground for Liberalism just now, but Sir John Pratt was specially unfortunate in having against him both a Labour candidate of a type most Liberals would be anxious to keep out and a Conservative candidate whose return, on personal grounds, they would strongly welcome.

President Coolidge's difficulties have been materially augmented this week by the passing of the Revenue Bill, and by his acceptance, under protest, of the Immigration Bill. The latter he could not veto, although the insistence of Congress upon the retention of the clause providing for the total exclusion of Japanese is a direct affront to himself and to the Secretary of State and creates a most serious diplomatic difficulty with Japan. The action of the Senate in this affair is perhaps the most curious example in our time of panic surrender to the herd instinct by an elective body. The new Immigration Act reduces the quota of Europeans admitted from 3 to 2 per cent., the basis of computation being changed from the Census of 1910 to that of 1890: an expedient designed, of course, to diminish the relative numbers of immigrants from the South and East of Europe. The passing of the Revenue Bill counts as the Administration's heaviest defeat so far. The President gave strong support to the Treasury's scheme of tax reduction, which was rejected by the Democrats and insurgent Republicans. The measure now passed is the work of this combined Opposition, and is far less favourable to big business. It is believed that Mr. Coolidge must sign the bill. If he should refuse to do so, his veto would be overridden, and his chances in the election almost destroyed.

A unanimous report, containing a series of significant proposals, has come from the Royal Commission on the Indian Public Services appointed last year with Lord Lee as Chairman. The Commission, consisting of four English and four Indian members, was required to consider questions of organization, recruitment, pay and pensions in the nine superior Services. Its terms of reference did not touch the Reform Act of 1919, but it was, of course, directly concerned with the situation created by the new Constitution and with the process of Indianization in the Services which is involved in the policy of progressive self-government. That process, together with the changed financial status of the public servant consequent upon the fall in the rupee and the rise of living costs in India and England, has brought into the Services a general discontent and apprehension which the home and Indian Governments alike were compelled to treat as an imperial matter of great moment and urgency. The root of discontent is largely financial; but the Commissioners recognize, as they were bound to do, that with the financial problem there is bound up the highly complex difficulty arising from the altered status of the European official class in India and the undoubted loss, as one of their number expresses

it, "of some of their faith in their own and their country's mission." The more serious grievances of the Services affect European officers almost entirely. This fact makes it all the more noteworthy that the Indian members should all have signed the report, subject only to a note of dissent on one point by Mr. B. Basu.

* * *

The Commission recommends the continuance of the system of recruitment by open competition, and the substantial maintenance of the power of appointment now vested in the Secretary of State. But it recognizes that, with the expansion of provincial autonomy, the Services must tend to lose their All-India character and become more specifically provincial in relation to the transferred departments of the Administration. It therefore proposes a new system of covenants and safeguards, and supports the scheme, already provided for in the statute, of a Public Service Commission, to be the governing authority in India with respect to all officials recruited in the country. No proposals are made for increasing the basic pay of the covenanted Indian Civil Service, but improvements are suggested in respect of overseas pay and allowances. As regards the Police and other Services the recommendations include increases in pay, and more generous arrangements as to pensions and allowances. The twofold aim of the Commission is to restore the former attraction of the Indian Services for the best types of young Englishmen, and to outline a scheme of organization which should give promise of working fairly amid the tremendous difficulties inseparable from an India in transition. The report is in the main admirable, and Lord Lee and his colleagues call for immediate action upon it. There is much evidence to enforce this appeal, but we confess that, with things as they are in India, the hope of an agreed Service policy seems rather slender.

* * *

The problem of the constitutional relationships of the Empire is considerably complicated by the correspondence between Canada and the British Government over the ratification by that Dominion of the Treaty of Lausanne. The standpoint of Canadian Ministers appears to be that if they are to be asked to sign a treaty, or to acquiesce in ratification on their behalf, Canada must have been represented, as at Paris in 1919, and at Washington in 1921-2, by its own delegates. At Lausanne no Dominion was so represented, or was invited by Great Britain to be so. The questions to be discussed were almost entirely European, though a more general problem is involved in the guarantee of the freedom of the Straits. The late Government considered the Marquis Curzon and Sir Horace Rumbold adequate to represent the Empire. Canada, without demurring to this arrangement at the time, entered a caveat, the nature of which the then Colonial Secretary (the Duke of Devonshire) may be pardoned for not fully comprehending. Ultimately, however, it was made perfectly clear that Canada did not feel called on to sign the Treaty, nor to recommend approval of it to the Canadian Parliament, nor to give formal assent to ratification. Canada, therefore, is apparently not to be bound by the Treaty of Lausanne at all. That in itself is a small matter. But the constitutional question raised by Canada's action is anything but small. Hitherto identity of foreign policy has been regarded as one of the few formal links that bind the Dominions and Great Britain.

* * *

Lord Birkenhead's long letter to the "Times" on the subject of crime and insanity is characteristic of himself, of the legal mind, and of the lawyers' reaction to proposals to amend the criminal law. It is a clever

advocate's clever speech to the jury asking them not to alter the law which says that a man is legally sane, so far as the criminal law is concerned, and therefore responsible for his actions, provided that (a) he knows the nature and quality of his act or (b) he knows that the act is wrong. Lord Birkenhead's advocacy is directed to prevent any amendment of this law—which, if juries could be induced to accept it strictly, would lead to the conviction of most lunatics accused of crimes—even in the direction recommended by the Committee which he himself appointed in 1922. He never considers the only relevant question, *i.e.*, whether, in fact, a man who, *e.g.*, does an act from an "irresistible impulse," knowing the nature of his act, may be insane, may have committed the act because he was insane, and may be no more "responsible" for that act than a man who, owing to mental disease, does not know that the act committed by him is wrong.

* * *

The idea of an Economic General Staff, so convincingly argued in this journal by Sir William Beveridge, has now found an able advocate in the columns of the "Times." Lord Esher, in a letter published last Monday, draws an interesting analogy between the difficulty of Mr. Shaw in possessing no power to deal with unemployment beyond that of placing suggestions before his colleagues at the head of other Departments, and the old difficulty which lay at the root of the problem of Imperial defence. Co-ordination was achieved in the latter sphere by the development of the Committee of Imperial Defence and the creation of an Imperial General Staff.

"Just as in matters of Imperial defence," writes Lord Esher, "the three Chiefs of the Staffs are constantly engaged under the presidency of a Minister of the Crown in what may be called research work, which forms the basis of discussion by the Committee of Imperial Defence, so in like manner, but with variations according to the precise nature of the domestic questions involved, selected persons might similarly be engaged in probing the difficult problems of domestic polity which now confront Parliament."

Lord Esher claims the support of the Lord Chancellor, the Colonial Secretary, and Mrs. Sidney Webb for this proposal, since they all signed the Report of Lord Haldane's Committee on the Machinery of Government, which contained a recommendation that the principle underlying the C.I.D. should "by no means be limited in its application to military and naval affairs, but should be applied as fully in the sphere of civil government."

* * *

The Final Report of the three Professors known as the Agricultural Tribunal has now been issued. They were appointed in pursuance of a promise made by Mr. Bonar Law in the General Election of 1922 that his Government would immediately examine the whole problem of agriculture "in the hope of making proposals which will assist the agricultural community to overcome their difficulties," and for some time they carried on a neck and neck race with the Linlithgow Committee in issuing reports for this purpose. But the many tentative proposals contained in their two interim reports of 1923 were never quite acceptable, and the unhappy policy of subsidies, to which they had given a provisional blessing, was decisively rejected at the polls. Now in a calmer and less political atmosphere they go back very wisely to their original task, which was to inquire into the methods adopted in other countries to increase the prosperity of their agriculture and the full use of their land, and advise how such results can be achieved here. In this Final Report of the Tribunal, with its strong support of agricultural co-operation, we have a very valuable contribution to this vexed subject.

THE GOVERNMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

"Finally, there is the running at the bung-hole of the national resources manifested in the maintenance of a million and a half of able-bodied men in idleness. . . . To the Labour Party, this reckless and demoralizing waste, amounting in hard cash to, certainly, several hundred million pounds a year, represents the crowning ineptitude of the national financial policy pursued alike by the Liberal and Conservative Parties. . . . The issue is not one of how to relieve the unemployed. . . . The Labour Party repudiates, as a remedy, any policy of doles. It is one of the primary functions of Government, so the Labour Party holds, actually to prevent the occurrence of unemployment as an epidemic disease of society (as distinguished from sporadic cases) in the same sense that Government (by which I do not mean Downing Street!) has actually, within the past half century, prevented cholera and typhus. That this can be done, at any rate in large part, in ways known to the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Labour (though possibly not by the Cabinet) the Labour Party has good reason to believe. *The practical programme for the actual prevention of unemployment was fully worked out in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission. It has been embodied in bill after bill by the Parliamentary Labour Party, which the Cabinet won't even take the trouble to read. . . .*"—Article by Mr. Sidney Webb, entitled "The Financial Policy of the British Labour Party," published in the "Manchester Guardian" Reconstruction Supplement, July 27th, 1922.

IN considering the attitude of the Government towards unemployment, two issues must be kept distinct:—(1) the light thrown on the pretensions which the Labour Party have paraded, and still parade, before the electorate, (2) the lines along which the problem of unemployment ought to be tackled. Upon the first issue, the evidence is already enough to warrant a decisive verdict. The claims of the Labour Party, as the above quotation shows, have been both enormous and exact. Doles were no remedy; unemployment was to be got rid of, like cholera and typhus; and, what was more, Mr. Sidney Webb knew precisely how to do it. And not Mr. Sidney Webb alone. The civil servants, he hinted, in the departments concerned, knew well enough what to do, if only they were not obstructed by the inexcusable ignorance and apathy of the Government of the day. The programme was "fully worked out"; it was not nationalization, as Mr. Webb argued disingenuously last week; it was embodied in the Minority Report, and given Parliamentary shape in bills that the Labour Party were continually pressing on capitalist Governments that refused to listen. All that was wanting was the will to give effect to it. Such was the claim; and the facts of the present session are enough to stamp it as an impudent imposture. Labour is in office; Mr. Sidney Webb is himself at the head of one of the departments which he specified as knowing what to do almost as well as himself. Yet quite obviously neither he nor his colleagues have any clear idea of how to set about the job. They strive to extend the schemes of their predecessors, which they derided last year as miserable expedients; and that was all that they could think of, until it suddenly occurred to poor badgered Mr. Shaw to send engineers to the Severn to inquire into the barrage scheme, of which so much was heard three years ago. Indeed, they are pathetically ready to inquire into any scheme which any kind gentleman can suggest. The only field of inquiry which they apparently know in advance to be barren is their own "fully worked out" programme. It was worked out, it seems, only in the sense that applies to an exhausted mine.

But for one consideration, we should not think it worth while to dwell on this aspect of the matter. The present Ministers are new to office; they are doing their best; the problem is difficult. If they promised more

than they could perform, that, after all, is the way of the political world. For our part, we never expected them to do much better. But Labour shows no signs of abandoning the extravagant pretensions, of which the above is a comparatively modest sample. The legend of an inspired Labour Party, immaculate in virtue, knowing just how to set right all the ills of the world, persists undisturbed, it seems, by the spectacle of a Labour Cabinet hesitant, fumbling, perplexed, like any other Cabinet, when confronted with the real problems of the day. It is not unimportant to expose this legend, for it is the chief obstacle to-day to the reshaping of our political divisions in accordance with real differences of outlook, which is required to clear up an anomalous Parliamentary situation.

This, however, is not the atmosphere that is most conducive to a constructive handling of the unemployment problem. From the way in which figures of expenditure on public utility schemes were bandied about last week in the House of Commons, it might almost be imagined that the chief duty of the Government in the matter was to spend the maximum amount of public money in the shortest possible time. There is a real danger, indeed, that Ministers may be goaded into schemes which should certainly not be undertaken, with a view to claiming that they have, after all, spent a substantially larger sum than their predecessors. This, it need hardly be said, is a grotesque criterion to apply. We are convinced that the development of capital undertakings, calculated to enhance our productive power, represents an urgent national need; and, for this purpose, it may be necessary, as we think it is, to contemplate a considerable expenditure from public funds. But we shall not make most progress in this direction if we envisage the matter as an emergency one to be dealt with by hastily improvised measures. What is wanted is to create such conditions as will enable the required development to proceed continuously and along sound lines.

We may illustrate our meaning by reverting to a problem, the intrinsic importance of which is, we believe, far greater than is generally recognized—the problem of motor-roads. Mr. Shaw referred to this problem in his speech last week: "Another matter on which I find myself unable to make any absolute declaration to-day is the improvement or maintenance of the main trunk roads of the country. The problem with which we find ourselves confronted is that the burden to be borne by the local authorities in the case of some of these main trunk roads is so great that it cannot be faced, with the result that there are roads which are neither what they ought to be nor what they might be. I hope to be able in the course of a fortnight to say definitely that a new method has been found, so that the important work already needed in this country will be undertaken on the main trunk roads."

Perhaps we had better wait for the remainder of the fortnight before attempting to interpret this cryptic passage. But if, as seems not unlikely, the Government contemplates transferring the main financial burden of the construction of trunk roads from the local authorities to the State, it is important to observe that it is very doubtful whether this is the best means of securing road development on the scale which is really required. If we are to exploit to the fullest the potentialities which are latent in motor-transport, we must envisage the construction of motor-roads on a scale commensurate with that on which railways were built in the last century. It seems to us almost hopeless to expect that this will be done, if the roads are to be provided as a free service by public authority, central or local. The resources which even the State can devote to purposes from which it can

derive no direct financial return are very limited. Moreover, we cannot afford to ignore the serious problems that will arise if the railways, compelled to charge rates sufficient to defray their own heavy capital charges, have to compete on grossly unequal terms with motor-transport, equipped with an efficient roadway system at the public cost. If we are to secure road development on the same scale as railway development, we shall be driven, we believe, to adopt the same principle that applies to railways; namely, that the traffic itself must pay, at any rate in the main, for the construction and upkeep of the roads. We have drawn our readers' attention in recent weeks to the project of the Northern and Western Motorway, which would give effect to this principle, by reverting, in what seems to us an unobjectionable form, to the device of tolls. The Motorways Bill, which would enable this road to be set in hand at once by private enterprise, is before Parliament; and the Government has still to declare its attitude towards it. It would, we believe, do more to secure an adequate road development by facilitating and adopting this Bill than by embarking on trunk road schemes of its own, which would inevitably make it more difficult to call in private enterprise later on. The Bill is supported by members of all parties. Mr. Clynes gave a sympathetic reply to a deputation which recently approached him on the subject. It is to be hoped that neither a doctrinaire prejudice against private enterprise, nor an ambition to push up the figure of State expenditure on unemployment schemes, will be allowed to prevent a fair consideration of the matter.

This project may serve to illustrate another point. We publish below a letter from Mr. R. H. Brand criticizing the article by Mr. J. M. Keynes which we published last week. We suspect that the difference between them is less than Mr. Brand supposes. We entirely agree with Mr. Brand that public expenditure is not the key to a wise policy of national development; but the State must none the less, we believe, play a part, and even a financial part. Mr. Brand admits that, "for some reason or another, private enterprise is not so well organized in this as in some other countries to carry out great schemes of development," and he attributes this weakness to certain deficiencies in our banking system. We cannot regard this as an adequate explanation. There is at least as much force in Mr. Keynes's suggestion that the promoters of public utilities are deterred by the knowledge that, in the event of success, they will not be allowed to reap more than a modest profit, while they stand to suffer unlimited loss in the event of failure. The moral, in our judgment, is irresistible that if the State is determined in effect to limit the possibilities of gain, it must balance the scales by sharing to some extent in the risk of loss; and this provides an ample justification for the principle of the Trade Facilities scheme. But that scheme, as administered at present, is hardly adequate to our needs. Mr. Brand observes that the Trade Facilities Committee have not been able to lend all the money put by Parliament at their disposal. It is pertinent to recall that the Minister of Transport indicated a few months ago in Parliament that it was unlikely that the Committee would assist the Northern and Western Motorway project owing to the risky character of the enterprise. The scheme is, in fact, virtually confined to applications of which the Committee feel sure that the risk to the State is trifling. We do not suggest that it should be used to promote wild-cat ventures; but it ought to be used to assist enterprises which entail a considerable financial risk, balanced by a strong probability of public advantage. In the case of motor-roads, after all, the practical alternative to the State sharing the risk of loss is that it

should foot the whole bill without the chance of any financial return. We do not believe, therefore, that we have yet fully explored the possibilities of co-operation between the State and private enterprise; and we should not allow dicta about mixing oil and water to close our minds.

A PARIS DIARY.

(FROM A FRENCH CORRESPONDENT.)

MAY 27TH.

WE had two Presidents.

I have already related here how it used to happen that when the one said "Yes" the other, as a rule, said "No." This has probably gone on until the present moment. Both defeated at the elections of May 11th, they have continued to choose different ways. M. Poincaré, who prides himself on practising fair play, now openly parades his endeavours to follow the example given by the British Conservatives at the beginning of January last, and declares that he is going to leave. But M. Millerand, encouraged by his family, proclaims his intention of staying on, in spite of all. Such are our embarrassments!

"But look here," said somebody to me, "what is the rule? The Constitution says that the President of the Republic is to be elected for the period of seven years by both Chambers, united in a Congress. M. Millerand, however, has not reached the end of his seven years. Therefore he ought to stay, if the rule be followed to the letter."

Yes. But M. Millerand himself, by neglecting the practice, has infringed the Constitution. Not being responsible to Parliament, he has endeavoured to instruct it. He tried to exercise pressure on the mass of the electors. He even went so far as to publish haughty threats. He has mixed in the struggle of the parties. He joined completely in the game, staking everything, knowing well that he was doing so, for he let it be understood that if the majority of voters did not rally to his point of view he would address a message to the country!

"M. Millerand staked his office. He lost it. Let him go, then!"

This is the way in which the Socialist Party (Léon Blum) and the Radical-Socialist Party (Paul Painlevé), who together have won 140 seats in the recently elected Chamber, argue with passion, but not quite without reason.

What will M. Herriot do?

I think he hoped to be able to put off this question for the present. Determined not to stand any personal interference in State affairs on the part of the President of the Republic, whoever he might be, and having made up his mind to put before M. Millerand such conditions as would render it impossible for him to undertake any action towards the head of the Government, of the nature of the blow that he dealt M. Briand in January, 1922, during the Conference at Cannes, M. Herriot had reason to believe that he would not meet with any opposition from that quarter. On such conditions it would have been possible to put off for a time the crisis at the "Elysée." But the declarations of the Departmental Federations of the Socialist Party, published last Monday, seem to make it more difficult to put off this question. The Socialist Party, led by M. Léon Blum, and the Radical-Socialist Party, under the leadership of M. Herriot, will each have their general Assembly next Sunday in Paris. The Socialist Party will doubtless stand up for the exclusion of M. Millerand. If the

Radical-Socialist Party acts in the same way the fate of M. Millerand is sealed: M. Herriot would refuse to form a new Cabinet, and would tell the President of the Republic the reason of his refusal! M. Painlevé would refuse; he has promised it solemnly. M. Briand would evade the offer: he has pledged himself formally to do so. And these three leaders guide a majority which would not tolerate the existence of any other Cabinet!

Some people may say that all this is not wise. But it is the consequence of the policy that has been followed for the last five years. The two Presidents had only one thing in common: they wanted France to feel and think as felt M. Millerand and as thought M. Poincaré. M. Millerand has become reactionary. M. Poincaré has always been a nationalist. But France in its heart is neither nationalist nor reactionary. No wonder, therefore, that on the eve of starting a new game she refuses to trust the cards either to M. Poincaré or to M. Millerand.

C.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

MR. R. H. BRAND'S VIEW.

SIR,—Perhaps you would allow me to make a few very brief comments on Mr. Keynes's interesting article in your issue of last week. Mr. Keynes, like all of us, is naturally very much concerned at the continuance of our great unemployment and at the comparative depression in industry, and seeks a remedy. He rightly believes that one essential element in getting on to a higher level of prosperity is "confidence and courage in those who set enterprise in motion." He accordingly inquires how this confidence and courage can be instilled into the leaders of industry and commerce, and arrives at the conclusion that this can best be achieved by the Treasury not merely postponing any redemption of existing debt, but "promoting expenditure up to (say) £100,000,000 a year on the construction of capital works at home." The works he has in mind are the mass production of houses, the adaptation of road-building to the needs of motor transport, and the development of economical means for the transmission of electrical power.

I feel far from certain myself whether such a scheme, which Mr. Keynes agrees is drastic, would, if put into practice, restore confidence and courage to the financial and industrial leaders of the community. After all, if it be Government expenditure, whether on the production of houses or road-building or anything else, which is needed to put our great staple industries on a sound basis, they ought all to be in a state of tearing prosperity by now.

Presumably, however, Mr. Keynes has in mind not simply the effect on prices and so forth of large expenditures by the Government, but the desirability of carrying through great schemes which will be themselves productive, or greatly cheapen the cost of production for other industries. It is not, however, easy to find schemes of this nature on anything like the wholesale scale which would be required in order to spend £100,000,000 or even £50,000,000 a year. For two or three years the Trade Facilities Committee have been ready to lend large sums of money to anyone requiring capital for such purposes. The very fact that the Committee have been able to lend comparatively little for use in this country leads to my mind to the conclusions:—

(1) That it is not capital for such schemes which is lacking in this country. This Mr. Keynes fully recognizes.

(2) That what is wanted is the means of making capital remunerative.

(3) That if the Government were to be able to spend anything at all appreciable outside such objects as houses and roads, it would have not merely, as under the Trade Facilities Act, to lend money to private industry on the best security possible, but either enter itself into partnership with private industry and take a large share of the risk, or carry out any schemes determined upon entirely at its own risk.

I do not, however, believe that a partnership between the Government and private enterprise in productive undertakings is effective. It is like mixing oil and water. Moreover, I consider that the last thing that would restore confidence and courage to industrial and financial circles is the entry of the Government itself into productive industry, either as a partner or as a competitor. Indeed, perhaps the greatest cause of the lack of confidence and courage at present is the general socialistic tendency of legislation, involving huge burdens for central and local expenditure, together with the uncertainty felt as to the tendency of future legislation. No one will freely embark on any new great schemes involving great sums of money and considerable risks without feeling certain that he is going to have a fair run for his money. Mr. Keynes will no doubt reply that it is just these tendencies which make Government participation inevitable. I am not sufficiently persuaded that we shall not before long recognize the seriousness of so much interference with private initiative, and see a great change in public opinion.

It may be that, for some reason or another, private enterprise is not so well organized in this as in some other countries to carry out great schemes of development, which, while extremely to be desired in the interests of the community, do not offer an opportunity of being immediately profitable. It is possible that a national scheme for the transmission of electrical energy may be one of the cases in point which private enterprise should tackle, but does not. We are certainly lamentably behindhand in the development of electrical power in this country, although that in itself is due very largely to earlier legislation restricting the freedom of private enterprise. It has always seemed to me paradoxical that we should sit in the City developing electrical schemes in Chile, Poland, and all sorts of other places in the world, and then go to our homes from Liverpool Street Station, which is clearly the one place in the world which is crying out for electrification. What it seems to me would be valuable would be to consider whether we are well organized for carrying out such schemes.

I have always thought myself that there is a certain weakness in our financial organization in this country for developing industry on the very large scale required to meet modern competition. In our joint-stock banks, indeed, we have the finest banks in the world, and their soundness and safety is largely due to their avoidance of industrial banking, such as is common on the Continent. Apart from them we have the great international acceptance houses, whose business is largely concerned with foreign countries, and who cannot, any more than can the great joint-stock banks, lock up large sums in industrial finances. There is, I think, certainly room for a type of bank common on the Continent, and in other countries, namely, an industrial bank or banks of a first-class character, and with a large capital, which would be closely interested in British industry, "nurse" new projects until they are fit to be presented to the public, and stand sponsor for issues to the public. It was always

my impression that in assisting the formation of the British Trade Corporation, the British Government intended to found an institution of this character. In practice, however, this idea has not been achieved.

It is in the direction of perfecting our organization, financial and industrial, in the amalgamation of interests in, for instance, the coal and steel industries, in a closer co-ordination, such as that suggested, of industry and finance, that we must look rather than to further large expenditures by the Government, which would weaken our national credit without, I think, doing much to put us on our feet.—Yours, &c.,

R. H. BRAND.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE Government have again owed their life to the support of the Liberals. The latter are as little satisfied as the Conservatives with the very inadequate fulfilment of the promises in regard to the cure of unemployment, but they have wisely refused to make themselves a party to bringing about a political crisis on this issue, and at this peculiarly delicate moment in regard to European affairs. There is, in spite of the failure of the German Nationalists so far to accept the Dawes Report without reserve, a better chance of finding the way to the peaceful settlement of Europe than there has been since the war ended, and it would be little short of a world disaster if the more favourable outlook were compromised by a political eruption here. For this reason, among others, it is gratifying to know that the official Liberal advice to the voters in the Texteth Division election was to support the Labour candidate, and that this was very largely done. It is unfortunate that a similarly reasonable attitude has not been shown by Labour at Oxford, where a Liberal seat is being gravely imperilled by the intervention of a Labour candidate. I have reason to know that the leaders of the party were anxious to avoid this provocative proceeding, as they might well be, seeing that the issue at stake is really the abolition of the McKenna duties. But in this, as in other cases, the party leaders have little influence with the local executives. I understand, however, that Mr. Fry's chances of holding the seat are excellent, thanks in no small measure to the popularity of the late member and the public anger at his deposition.

With the sensational change that has come over the complexion of France, it was inevitable that M. Caillaux should emerge from the political catacomb to which he has been so long confined by his enemies. The proposed amnesty is, of course, conceived to meet his case, but it is not surprising that he should regard this formal whitewashing as inadequate, and that he should ask for a new trial. I expect that the reactionaries will have as little taste for a public reopening of the matter as they had in the case of Dreyfus. From what I hear they realize that the return of M. Caillaux to official life is now a matter merely of time, and probably of a short time. His suppression was an expedient for discrediting a cause, and now that that cause is in the ascendant he will come back, probably all the stronger for his ostracism. In many ways he is the ablest of living

French statesmen, and his peculiar gift, that of finance, is precisely the one which his country most needs at the present time.

The controversy about the notorious interview with Mr. Baldwin still continues, and it has received a new stimulus by the disclosure of the author, Captain F. W. Wilson, who insists on its absolute veracity. When I saw the name it seemed familiar to me, and I turned to my newspaper cuttings and found among them an interview with a Captain F. W. Wilson which appeared in the "New York Evening Post" last year. It was an interview in which Captain Wilson, who was described as formerly of the "Daily Mail," and later of the "Sunday Times," was represented as expressing his views as to the contrast between the sense of humour of the Americans and of ourselves. Here is an extract:—

"A correspondent of the London 'Daily Mail,' Capt. Wilson found himself at Brussels at the time the war broke out. 'They telegraphed out they wanted stories of atrocities,' he said. 'Well, there weren't any atrocities at the time. So then they telegraphed out they wanted stories of refugees. So I said, "That's fine. I won't have to move." There was a little town outside Brussels where one went to get dinner—a very good dinner too. I heard the Hun had been there. I supposed there must have been a baby there. So I wrote a heartrending story about the Baby of Courbeck-Loo being rescued from the Hun in the light of the burning homestead. The next day they telegraphed out to me to send the baby along as they had had about 5,000 letters offering to adopt it. The day after that baby clothes began to pour into the office. Even Queen Alexandra wired her sympathy and sent some clothes. Well, I couldn't wire back to them that there wasn't any baby, so I finally arranged with the doctor that took care of the refugees that the blessed baby died of some contagious disease, so it couldn't have a public burial. And we got Lady Northcliffe to start a crèche with all the baby clothes.'"

It would be interesting to know if this humorous person is the same Captain F. W. Wilson who is now in the public eye. The matter is of some importance, not only in regard to its bearing upon the Baldwin interview, but also in regard to the traditions of the English Press.

I had the pleasure of witnessing one of the performances given this week to celebrate the opening of the Barn Theatre at Oxted. The plays presented were "The School for Scandal" and "As You Like It." Both were given by the villagers of Oxted and Limpsfield, and the rendering of Sheridan's comedy which I saw was admirable, the Charles Surface of Mr. Atkins being a surprisingly finished performance, and the Sir Peter Teazle, played by the Vicar of Limpsfield, having, like the Lady Teazle of Miss M. Brock and the Lady Sneerwell of Miss M. Seyd, very conspicuous merits. Costumes and scenery alike were of local production, and the whole affair was a remarkable tribute to the village drama movement which the British Drama League is encouraging. But I refer to the matter here because the experiment at Oxted has special significance. The difficulty in connection with the Village Players movement is adequate accommodation. It has been overcome at Oxted by the formation of a company, promoted by Mr. Lewis Fry, Sir Ernest Benn, and others, which has erected a very beautiful barn theatre, capable of holding five hundred people. The value of such a centre, not merely for the service of the Village Players, but for the general social life of rural communities, is so obvious that the example of Oxted should be widely known in order that it may be widely imitated.

I hear good reports of the Wembley Exhibition. The attendance, apart from exceptional occasions like that of the Empire Day celebration, which drew the largest crowd there has yet been, is more than satisfactory, and the public verdict on the show, which is the only verdict that really matters from the point of view of success, is favourable, and even enthusiastic. The King and Queen have done excellent service by their repeated visits in keeping the Exhibition before the public mind, and any anxiety which the promoters may have had as to the success of the colossal enterprise is sensibly disappearing. Little now remains to be done to make it complete in all its departments, and most of the annoyances and defects of the early days, including the mud, have been overcome. I think there is still need, however, for something to be done to enable the visitors to find their way about with more ease. The place is so vast, and there is so much to see, that much time is lost in tracing and retracing steps in that most tiring of all labours, the quest of something that is not easy to find. The police are doing excellent service in the matter, but there seems room for some well-considered way of supplementing their efforts at central points.

* * *

The cricket season has so far given little promise of a recovery of that liveliness which is necessary to restore the popularity of the game. Hobbs is plainly out of form, and apart from a few bright innings by P. G. H. Fender and some brilliant bowling by Parkin there has been little to attract attention. The game is still overcome by the sleeping sickness that has afflicted it so long and that seriously threatens its appeal as a public spectacle. Four instances that have occurred within the past few days will indicate what is wrong with the game. Freeman, of Essex, on Monday occupied two hours in scoring 23 runs, Bowden, of Derbyshire, was at the wickets two hours and forty minutes for 39, Lee, of Middlesex, took nearly two hours and a half in making 34, and at Lord's on Monday J. H. Douglas scored his second single at the end of three-quarters of an hour of batting. No game can survive this funereal frugality on the part of its exponents.

* * *

Four weeks ago I made a reference, based on quotations from the articles themselves, to the character of the dispatches on European affairs which Mr. H. Belloc sends weekly to the "New York Evening Post," and which are widely syndicated in the United States. The matter seemed to me one of grave importance at a time when the attitude of this country towards the Poincaré policy needed the clearest definition to the public of other countries, and especially of America. To-day Mr. Belloc replies, not to the substance of my comments, but to an incidental remark I made on the subject of his military criticism during the war. I wrote from my general recollection of his contributions to "Land and Water," and with particular reference to a reply he made to the military correspondent of the "Times" as to the probable speed of the Russian advance into Germany; but I have not been able to refer to the file of the now defunct newspaper in which he wrote, and accept unreservedly his denial that he made prophecies of what would happen during the war. I have the more readiness in doing so because the suggestion was irrelevant to the matter to which I felt it necessary to refer, and from which I am anxious that public attention should not be diverted by a side issue.

A. G. G.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE SHAW DILEMMA.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28TH.

THE better part of a fortnight has been spent in the hunting of Shaw. The lot of the Minister of Labour—and his rabbits—has not been a happy one. He has been placed, like Uriah the Hittite, in the forefront of the battle. His position is the most important one in the present Government. Had he only been relegated to such minor departments as the War Office, the Admiralty, or the Scottish Office he could have cooed out the official platitudes and evasions with as much acceptance as Mr. Stephen Walsh, Mr. Ammon, or Mr. Adamson. But he has been situated where the main attack must of necessity concentrate: and this ought to have been foreseen when the Government was made. He is compelled either to defend complicated Bills on Insurance, with actuarial and financial calculations which he is altogether unable to comprehend, or to submit what reply he can to questions on the half-crazy promises of "immediate" work for the unemployed when Labour came into office. His own past is blameless in that respect. He himself promised little, and probably expected nothing. But manifestos signed by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. Clynes, Miss Bondfield (his Under-Secretary), and others, had promised the electors a bright and better England, with happy workers assiduously employed in reclaiming land, planting trees, protecting coasts, constructing houses, producing electric-power stations. "Work—not doles," raked in thousands of votes to the Socialist "hive" in December. At the end of May they could not produce the suggestion of a single one of these great visions. Nor could Mr. Shaw have produced one, had he desired to do so. The best of the joke is, he pleaded, laughing heartily, that I (as Minister of Labour) cannot put a single man to work. This in the midst of severe or sorrowful complaint produced the effect of the man who laughed heartily on the scaffold because they were hanging the wrong man. It is understood that the master minds of the Cabinet—the Prime Minister, Lord Haldane, Mr. Sidney Webb, and the like—have been engaged in celebrating these vast schemes. But their celebrations seem to have gone all awry and to have lost their name of action. They were the real subjects of impeachment. But they kept sedulously away from the House while the debates continued. Only Mr. Webb at the end of a long day's discussion uttered some irrelevant platitudes to an impatient audience. Mr. Shaw was left day after day a pitiful, solitary figure, only supported by his assiduous Under-Secretary, who has not yet acquired the habit of omitting the rhetoric of the platform and coming down to the drearier work of detail. He rolled about the empty bench. He smiled sadly through his benignant spectacles. He laughed heartily, if a little mournfully, at all the jests made at his expense. In the debate on his salary, coming from his stormy impeachment in a Labour Party meeting, he had evidently been instructed to drown the issue in a shower of meaningless phrases. Mr. MacDonald, making one of his occasional appearances in debate, lent him his moral support while he bellowed out in violent tones praise of Mr. MacDonald's "magnificent" foreign policy, denunciations of the Treaty of Lausanne, which Mr. MacDonald had just persuaded the House to ratify, and pleasant observations on hostile newspapers and blundering politicians. After which "magnificent" performance the Prime Minister forsook him and fled—leaving, as a critic unkindly said, the "rabbit" to the "wolves." Perhaps this was the better thing to do: for the sport palled in face of the distress of this good-natured, kindly man. It was like hunting a child. Everyone was sorry when again on Monday he came to smash on the question of the compulsory insurance of children: in which he first repudiated an amendment, then accepted it, then repudiated it again, and finally walked with his colleagues into the lobby in support of it, leaving not a wrack—save Mr. John Ward, Mr. Hogge, and three recalcitrant supporters—behind.

I am writing before the Tory attack on Thursday, and therefore cannot tell how far the issue will be brought to a head. This may result in a period of tranquillity, or again in substantial upheaval. But it is quite evident that the present Government have not the intelligence or energy or courage to implement the amazing promises made, and that their prolongation of life will merely leave them floundering deeper in the abyss. There will be no visible fissure in the ranks of Labour; but the curses on the back benches are deep and loud; and I should not be surprised to find a reorganization, perhaps of a drastic character, before the Autumn Session begins, if they last so long.

The debate on the second reading of the Finance Bill was curiously dead. In a House crowded, attentive, silent, in a condition in which Mr. Asquith described the Capital Levy—a "happy state of hibernation"—the leader of the Liberal Party kept members of all parties delighted with a masterly review of the whole financial situation. Perfect in phrasing, full of passing touches of humour, with subtle digs at Mr. Lloyd George sitting opposite (whose Budget of 1909 he described as "slightly tilting" the situation!) and at Mr. Baldwin opposite, he compressed into one speech as much matter and suggestive criticism as suffices the normal orator for a dozen performances. Afterwards the number of would-be speakers exceeded that of the reluctant audience. The real truth is that the innumerable stages through which a Budget has to pass, although survivals of an age when Parliament jealously guarded the voting of aids and finances to the King's Government, inevitably lead to repetition and consequent weariness. There is a general debate of some days in Committee on the Budget Resolutions. There is a further debate on the Report Stage of the Budget Resolutions. There are debates on the second reading, the Committee Stage clause by clause, the Report Stage, and the third reading of the Finance Bill. The only two substantially controversial elements—the abolition of the McKenna Duties and of the preferential taxes on food—have been taken out of the general criticism and allotted to separate days. Altogether, as the weather grows hotter and social functions increase, it seems likely that the remaining stages will be carried through in half-empty Houses.

Indeed, the interest is ebbing from Parliament. Only the Housing Bill remains to be presented: and that is to be so drawn as to offer the minimum of criticism. There will be work for the undaunted specialists in the Committees upstairs—specialists on Agriculture, on Insurance, on Housing, and the like. But there is no Bill which would have been regarded as first class even in the ancient, more spacious days; nothing stimulating to fierce and intelligent debate like the prolonged controversies over the 1909 Budget, the House of Lords' Veto, or the old Home Rule Bill. The measures now introduced are of the kind which Parliament used to take "in its stride" while violent debate took place on the floor of the House. The more sporting back-benchers introduce in the mildest possible fashion Bills of sensational change: such as Mr. Ben Turner, who looking like all the minor prophets rolled into one, and fortified by quotations from the twenty-fourth Psalm, advocated a modest proposal to "restore to the nation all lands, minerals, rivers, streams, and tributaries." *Sic itur ad astra*. "I don't want to hurt a single person in the world," was the disarming confession, with a mild complaint that "some of us *did* starve on the food the Government provided for us in the war." These aphorisms, combined with curiosity and sympathy with the earnestness of the prophet, nearly moved the House to allow him to introduce his cheery vindication of the plans of the Almighty. But the Labour Government itself remains quiescent in the matter—not even "nibbling" at the nationalization of a single "tributary."

M.P.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RAILWAY RATES.

SIR,—A Roman poet once remarked *Facit indignatio versum*; at least in the case of Mr. Adams, whose letter on National Development appears in your issue of May 24th, it has led to poetical licence in dealing with railway rates. May I give one or two samples?

Mr. Adams says "railway carriage rates are on the average well over 60 per cent. beyond pre-war figures." The ton-mile rate in 1913, as nearly as can be ascertained, was .935d. According to the latest statistics, for February last, the figure is now 1.367d., an increase of about 46 per cent. The ton-mile average rate in 1921 was, in round figures, 2d.; it is now 1½d., a reduction of 33 per cent. I should have thought this was meritorious rather than blameworthy.

Mr. Adams says "present charges ought not to be more than 25 per cent. above pre-war," that increase of wages is not sufficient justification for them, as wages are only "apparently though not really excessive." Here are the facts. The railway receipts (omitting, that is, non-railway businesses of the Companies) were in 1913 £125 million, of which wages took £45 million, or 36 per cent. In 1923 the railway receipts were £206 million, of which wages took not less than £100 million, or, say, 50 per cent. Had the railway rates been increased by 25 per cent. only, the receipts would have been £176 million. Deducting from this figure £100 million wages and, say, £49 million for the statutory net income, there would remain available for other expenditure, which in 1913 amounted to £31 million, no more than £29 million. And coal has meanwhile practically doubled in price.

Mr. Adams states that "between £300 million and £400 million represent the cost of the land on which the railways are built." Would he be good enough to say what is his authority for this statement? I should be very much interested to have it. I have hitherto supposed that the actual figures were unattainable, and in their absence I have been in the habit of guessing the land cost at less than half the lowest figure stated by Mr. Adams.—Yours, &c.,

W. M. ACWORTH.

May 24th, 1924.

PROFITEERING IN BREAD.

SIR,—In Mr. Adams's letter in last week's *NATION* there is probably much truth. The high cost of lodging, of travelling, and of food does owe some of its height to profiteering. I think, however, that he is not quite just to the bakers; evidently because he does not nearly know their case. In the trade there are potential profiteers who might wish to do all the coercive things he suggests, but they are very powerless. As a matter of policy the National Association of Master Bakers refuses to interfere in price questions. If there is any attempt at regulation it is by local societies, but never beyond trying to obtain a fair price for their bread, and the attempt is nearly always a failure. In every considerable town in England it is possible to buy bread, good bread, at several prices, the range being as much as 1d. on a 2 lb. loaf. But Mr. Adams did not know, or chose not to refer to, one of the principal causes of the high price of bread, a cause responsible for at least 6s. out of the 12s. per quarter of wheat which he suggests the public are paying in excess of the proper price. Were he a baker—and there is no trade easier to enter—he would know that the little amateur experiments, supposed to supply proof of the bakers' profiteering, really prove nothing. But the cause of the high price to which I referred is the law. Lord Devonport, evidently on the advice of officials, when control of food was undertaken in 1917, made a regulation disallowing the manufacture and sale of loaves of bread unless in weights of 1 lb. or an even number of pounds. This regulation, on one pretext or another, has been kept in being up to the present, and now the Government is about to make it perpetual, or, at least, to rigidly fix the weight of the loaves a baker may sell. A Bill for the purpose has just been read a second time in Parliament. Now, it seems to people who do not know the technical difficulties, or the economic effects, that it is quite a good thing that the public should "get their weight": it

seems so fair, and is so very plausible. But the effect of such a regulation is that the baker cannot alter the weight of his loaf by fractions, say ounces, and this disability absolutely prevents him from allowing the public any relief when there is a fall in the market price of flour of less than 4s. per sack of 280 lbs. But flour prices are not accommodated to suit this 4s. unit, which is roughly the equivalent of a farthing on a 2 lb. loaf, but move up and down by 1s., 2s., or 3s. a sack for possibly a year or so. As long as it keeps within the 4s. limit the baker is forced to keep up his price, taking extra profit when prices fall and getting less when they rise. The risk entailed by the rigidity of the regulation justifies him amply in keeping up his price as long as he can. But that is not all. The only point in his operations at which he can control the weight of his loaves is about an hour or so before he sets them in the oven. Hundreds of loaves set in an oven of varying heats at different parts differ in weight in an incalculable way when they come out as loaves of bread, although they were of exactly the same weight when they were put in. On this account the baker, to comply with the regulation, has to allow a margin of 4 ozs. of dough to ensure that the lightest loaf is 2 lbs., and in doing so must make a large number of them over 2 lbs. For this margin he must, if he can, charge another farthing on the loaf: he cannot charge less. The common-sense thing to do is to allow the baker to alter the weights of his loaves by 1 oz., or such number of ounces as would permit him to give the public the benefit of a fall in the price of flour of, say, 1s. per sack, or charge them for a small increase in price by the same method. A Select Committee of the House of Commons that dealt with this matter in 1915 suggested that fair way of dealing with the public, but as the plan might be less easy for Weights and Measures Inspectors, it was turned down by the Interdepartmental Committee on whose recommendations this new Bill is based. The baker's actions are to be deliberately frustrated in the only direction in which he can be just to the public: he is to be forced by law into profiteering, then grumbled at by those responsible for his situation. It should be noted that in its main principle this proposed new law is identical with the old Assize Law, which was, by general consent, abolished in 1815. The magistrates then set the price of bread, but found they could never do it justly to both baker and public. In most localities it was allowed to be in abeyance. This new Bill is justified by its authors as a Bill to "provide for the better protection of the public in relation to the sale of bread," but it is really only a Bill to enlarge the power of Inspectors, and its effect, if it becomes an Act, will be, as the same regulation has already, to increase the price of bread, reduce variety, encourage underbaking, destroy crusty loaves, and make the baking trade much more speculative than it ought to be. Under the existing Bread Acts the public are entitled to know what weight of bread they are buying, so need no "better protection."—Yours, &c.,

JOHN KIRKLAND.

THE TUNEFUL NINE.

SIR,—May a country person, who has read "The Nine" with some amusement, put in a demurrer not to what is said but to what is suggested by the writer? H. C. is fortunate in having neighbours who provide him with such good copy. But I cannot help thinking that, from this point of view, he is exceptionally well placed, and eccentricities, I submit, are not confined to Establishments; nor is it evident that they are the "results of the union between Church and State."

The Parish Magazine is certainly not literature. But, as certainly, its readers would not read it if it were. So, too, with the sermons described as "wretched," "drivelling," "deplorable," &c. I have no doubt that they are so. But—may one who has a certain knowledge both of England and Scotland say it?—though no Scottish congregation would tolerate them, they are precisely the kind of sermon that English churchgoers expect and like. The average English congregation is incapable of following consecutive thinking in religion; and a Scottish preacher would empty a London church. And the *sine quâ non* is brevity. Unless I am much mistaken, H. C.'s "seven-minute" preacher is popular with his hearers; they like it short. And—is it essential that those who minister to a scanty gathering of children and agricultural labourers should have heard of Mr. G. B. Shaw?

Mr. Shaw, I am sure, has too much humour to think so. What a hash these excellent clerics would make of his ideas!

The attitude of certain of "the Nine" to Dissent is more serious. But is the Bishop free from blame? He cannot, indeed, teach such persons decency; that virtue will not grow in this soil. But if—I fear I must underline the *if*—the Burial Service is mutilated in the way described, he can proceed against the offender; and he can make no secret of his disapproval.

For the rest, H. C. expects too much. It would, no doubt, be well if the clergy, in country or in town, combined the qualities of the scholar, the preacher, the organizer, and the apostle. But "men, not Angels, are the ministers of the Gospel"; to look for more is to ask for better bread than is made with wheat. The English clergy are seldom what Jowett calls "persons of education"; their theology is often that of a past generation; their general culture is small. Their poverty is often acute; there are few benefices which can be held by men without private means: and how, or whether, this economic difficulty can be solved remains to be seen. Meanwhile, it is not only to Churchmen that it may seem that Camerina is best unmoved. The village, unless things are very wrong, understands the parson, and is tolerant of his foibles; it would rather have him there than not. He is a link in country life which may be destined to disappear, but whose disappearance will be regretted. It is possible to exaggerate the significance of our half-empty churches; "in the country we see our failures": as a fact the proportion of churchgoers in the country is larger than in towns. And it is a mistake, at least in the country, to suppose that the *parvus deorum cultor et infrequens* is hostile to, or even indifferent to, religion. But this is another subject; and this letter is already too long.—Yours, &c.,

A. F.

MR. BELLOC'S REPUTATION.

SIR,—It has been brought to my notice that in your issue of May 3rd you printed with regard to my work upon the war the following statement: that I had prophesied the arrival of the Russian steam-roller at Berlin upon such and such a date and at Breslau upon such and such a date. The statement is a complete fabrication, both in its literal form and in its spirit. I never did or could have used the phrase "the Russian steam-roller." That term was the peculiar and characteristic creation of the Harmsworth press. I never forecast the arrival of any force at any point at any time. I never, in the whole of those long years of careful work, made any pretence to foretell what none could know.

Either the statement was made by someone who had never read my work, in which case it was a monstrous example of irresponsibility; or it was made by someone who had read my work, in which case it was a deliberate untruth. In any case, you passed it and used it as a weapon in the financial propaganda carried on by your paper, and it is now your duty to give this correction as much publicity as you gave the original falsehood.—Yours, &c.,

H. BELLOC.

May 25th, 1924.

[A. G. G. replies to this characteristic letter in "Life and Politics."—Ed., THE NATION.]

MR. WALPOLE ON SCOTT.

SIR,—Mr. Hugh Walpole has increased our respect by raising the standard of Sir Walter Scott. A comparison in retrospect, now the lights are turned down, is not uninteresting.

With whatever drawbacks, the Victorians had character—they toiled—and for that reason Morley and Harcourt, in politics, are likely to remain *somebodies*. I suppose it could be maintained six Thackerays could be carved out of one Dickens. Trollope may not rise so high or low as Dickens, but he is more even, soothing, and entertaining, and, "Q." says, "has hands." Mrs. Gaskell can easily walk away with "Wives and Daughters" and "Cousin Phillis." George Eliot would vacate her Judgment Seat for the idyll "Silas Marner," and George Borrow would vacate nothing. Of course, Charlotte Brontë is the greatest of all Englishwomen—akin to Sappho. The O.M. for the first half a dozen

novelists would then appear to be Scott, Austen, Trollope, Gaskell, Borrow, Hardy.

But to return to Sir Walter, and health, and his gallery of men and women. He takes us into an ideal world—"the mountain tops, where's the throne of truth." Read by few or many, it matters not. He is our prose Homer, and as deathless as the creator of Helen of Troy.—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD GILLBARD, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

INSURANCE SUPPLEMENT, MAY 17th.

SIR,—With reference to the table of comparative Sums Assured for an Annual Premium of £10 which appeared in the above, I regret to find that the explanatory note appended to the figures supplied by this Office was not inserted, and it is therefore made to appear—to quote the accompanying article—that the figures relating to this Society "are estimates only and cannot be guaranteed."

The omitted note states on the contrary that:—

"The above figures (Endowment Sum Assured and Bonuses £333, Whole Life Sum Assured and Bonuses £598) are for Endowment and Whole Life Assurances under which the Sum Assured is increased by the addition of Guaranteed Simple Reversionary Bonuses of 30s. per cent. per annum, and the results shown are not, as in the case of ordinary with-profit assurances, contingent upon future profit earnings. The Society has discontinued the issue of these latter."

This important fact is emphasized in the first paragraph of the Society's Tables of Rates, of which I enclose a copy:—

"The distinctive feature of the Tables is that, without exception, they provide for contracts in which the benefits are guaranteed and absolute throughout. The Policies provide a maximum amount of assurance at minimum cost, and are entirely devoid of all speculative elements as regards the Sum Assured."

I shall be obliged if you will remedy in your next issue this omission to note the special characteristics of the Society's Perfected System of Assurance, which, you will admit, is an important factor in a comparative table such as you have published.—Yours, &c.,

W. A. WORKMAN, General Manager,
Legal and General Assurance Society, Ltd.
10, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

A NINETEENTH-CENTURY CHILDHOOD.

By MARY MacCARTHY.

VII.*

FOR some years now, after Adela and I had left the schoolroom, it had been our custom to spend the end of the season in London. This came about every year because the wife of a Colonel in the Guards persuaded my mother to let her occupy our house at Runnymede, while she lent us her house in London.

"So good for sweet Adela and Mary to have a little fling? So good for darling Evelina's lessons?" reads my mother from the persuasive Mrs. Darcy's letter.

"And so good for Mrs. Darcy to have the river, the garden, and the library," adds the Warden a little tartly over the rim of the "Times."

Once more the four-wheeler piled with luggage has brought us away from Paddington and turned into the eighteenth-century square, as into a hushed cove, out of the roaring sea of Oxford Street. We alight at Mrs. Darcy's house. My mother is at once perfectly happy in the drawing-room with its long mirrors and Bühl furniture, where at a great escritoire she seats herself and writes imaginative letters telling her friends where to come and find her.

But Mr. Kestell sits in the over-furnished boudoir with Adela, Mary, and Evelina, and they all grumble together in the drowsy afternoon heat, surrounded on all

sides with Adonises of the Guards in silver frames, which presently they will put away.

"The Colonel, you may be sure, doesn't like my study, and I don't like his," says Mr. Kestell. He has thrown one knee over the other and is shaking his foot impatiently. "It's a mere tank with his racing calendar and spurs and a stale smell of cat rising up from the pavement."

"Mother is probably writing a letter upstairs saying that the Warden is as happy as a king in the Colonel's study," says Adela.

"And Mrs. Darcy is probably writing a letter saying that the Colonel is as happy as a king in Mr. Kestell's dear, delightful, dowdy study," Mary suggests.

"No; dear, delightful, dowdy Mr. Kestell's study," suggests Evelina, throwing her arms round the Warden's neck.

"You see, father, it was exceedingly tiresome of you to submit to the exchange again this year," she adds.

"Oh, well, your mother does so much enjoy London, and it is really useful to me to be at the British Museum every day just now, I must remember. You will enjoy your season."

"Oh, no, father, we shall not for a single moment. We have no clothes—we are dowdy. Nothing could satisfy me but to be simply tremendously smart and dash round the Park, driving a barouche and pair with a tiger on the back seat," says Mary fiercely, a swift vision of a totally unattainable elegance darting into her head.

Adela then grumbles too. "Yes, and just look at our engagements. The Archbishop's Garden Party and the Bishop's Garden Party. Old Sir Theodore's jaunt, and then there's that hop at Lady A's. She only knows about twelve young men—all under life-size or with squints."

"This is absurd," says Mr. Kestell. "You want me to exclaim over and over again like Mrs. Allen, when she took Catharine Morland to Bath: 'If only we had some acquaintance here!' As a matter of fact you know perfectly well that lots of fun will crop up, and before you know where you are, you are in a whirl of most delightful parties, my dear children," says Mr. Kestell, thinking that the grumbling must really cease.

But Mary goes on querulously. "Then the awful shopping. Everything lovely too expensive—dying of heat in shops, and coming out with nothing but a nervous break-down!"

"My dear, my dear! Your father ought to have had ten thousand a year at least. You must be good!" says Mr. Kestell.

"Mary, you adore shopping," says Adela severely.

We have all been rather like babies waking up from sleep and wailing at absolutely nothing. But it is a thundery, stifling afternoon. After some fragrant tea out of Mrs. Darcy's Crown Derby, we feel refreshed, and soon our mood completely changes. We see Mr. Kestell off affectionately, at the front door, in his scholarly, black morning-coat and Ruskinian-blue tie drawn through a ring. Though he will only be out until the evening, we all embrace him as if he were going on a far journey; and though we have all just spent some hours together he wishes to know exactly when he is to see us all again.

"Remember we shall spend a great deal of money on clothes when we go out," says Adela.

"Yes, you will be punished for bringing us here by our extravagance," Mary says with a Goneril-like thrust at the last.

"No, no, no. Poor, but clean. Poor, but clean. Remember my motto for clothes," and he runs down the steps and disappears down the street. He may be going to the London Library to look up some point for the book of Mediæval Chivalry that he is writing, or to look in at Sotheby's to see some Elzevirs that he feels with pain will certainly be bought for America; then he will probably call on an old lady at St. James's Palace; or visit the Athenæum where he will hide behind pillars from other old gentlemen; or hear an anthem at the Abbey before he has finished his day.

Adela and I in the late afternoon stroll through Hanover Square and Bond Street, tantalized as we flatten

* Parts I. to VI. appeared in THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM for September 1st and 8th, November 3rd, and December 15th, 1923; and February 9th and April 19th, 1924.

our noses abstemiously in the "street of elegant shops." We both adore shoes, hats, and gowns. Then we jingle down to Knightsbridge in a hansom, and here we flatten again, and then make a self-indulgent plunge inside. We buy green shoes, to wear with white muslin Sir Joshua dresses.

"Cleanliness *can't* be combined with poverty," says Adela, remembering Mr. Kestell's injunctions, among billows of flowered chiffon.

"No, I know, it's impossible," says Mary, and she swerves and pounces upon white silk stockings to wear with green shoes. In the end we spend a great deal and everything is put down to Mrs. Kestell's account. It is "feast" not "Fast" just now. "Le grand livre" will lie in its drawer for many a day after the exchange of houses with Mrs. Darcy, for no one will have the courage to bring it out.

That evening, Mrs. Kestell at her writing-table is writing to one of her friends:—

"Adela and Mary are off, radiant, to their dance, looking like flowers in their calyxes, with their sweet young faces in their white and green."

"Why *do* they say these things to each other?" says Adela in the hansom trotting across the Park to the dance at Mrs. Tallboys' on Campden Hill. She has just repeated the words that she read over her mother's shoulder to Mary and Mr. Fitzgerald, who is accompanying them to the dance, and peals of laughter have floated out of the hansom into the summer dusk.

"Yes, and all the time mother knows quite well what a devil's heart lies under Mary's Burne-Jonesy sweetness," says Adela.

"And that M. Anatole France isn't in it for Adela's cynicism, though she drifts about being thought a very sweet creature!" says Mary.

"Which part of you is the calyx, do you suppose?" says Fitzgerald, leaning out over the hansom doors, enjoying the girls' conversation and his cigarette.

The latter is our greatest friend. We cannot do without him. He seems to have unlimited time, and though he strolls through life as if it were a vast exhibition, at any booth of which he can tarry as long as it pleases his fancy, he never appears in the least demoralized by leisure; though there are grave head-shakings over his "career." Everyone may be concerned about him, but he quietly goes his own way.

He seems to set our minds free from the pressure of social primness of the outer circle at Runnymede. We are natural and happy with him as he takes us round with him, making a diverting Lord George Sanger-like show for us out of social London, by his subtle observation, his humane humour, and his detachment.

And now we are trip-clip-clopping, trip-clip-clopping up through the leafy bowers of Campden Hill, and stop at a tall Norman-Shaw architected house—alight, and pass through marble, up marble, through a close conglomeration of Italian shrines, caskets, cabinets, marqueterie; against the tangled background of William Morris's pomegranates; past the pictures by Rossetti, Sir Frederic Leighton, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, and Mr. Watts, of which the host is the renowned possessor. On and across the parquet floor to the fascinating, artistic, gracious hostess, and to the massive, comfortable chaperons in their rich waisted velvets and long trains, seated in formidable yet customary array.

We have dance programmes given us, on which is printed only one word, "Valse," all the way down, interspersed twice with the word "Lancers." Soon, in our shimmering white or pink satins, with our long white kid gloves, elegant waists and sprays of flowers on the left side of our bodices, our hair coiled on the nape of our necks or on the top of our heads, our trains first swirling about our feet, then gracefully caught up and managed, we fall with our partners into the swinging rhythm of that old "Blue Danube" Valse.

Duennas and chaperons were fast going out even at that date; but at this house many lorgnons still bristled, and elderly heads nodded together over the

young things whirling round the centre of the room; for Mrs. Tallboys had a passion for young people, and invited her eminent contemporaries to come and watch them as though they were a lot of young sea-lions plunging about, at whom it was a great pleasure to look. Thus many of her friends would come and look on, diverted by the antics of the young creatures and secretly prognosticating mating. We were used to this. Had the phalanx been a dull one it would have been depressing, but as a matter of fact the fine vitality of the elderly and eminent, both male and female, of Mrs. Tallboys' acquaintance, gave a certain spice to the dances in her house. She had a particular atmosphere and "tenue" of her own.

Over one's partner's shoulder one would see, for instance, that Mr. Henry James had come in. A few more whirls round, and one has a glimpse at his face, which betrays that nervous suffering which a sense of the shortcomings of words was apt to throw him into at any moment. It was an artist's agitation carried to an extreme over possible failure in expressing his fine and complicated idea; a hesitation that postponed the moment when he must eventually let the inadequate little phrase pass from between his lips at a run, since his listener waited.

At the amusing phrase at last chosen the hostess would throw back her head a moment, laughing, and then perhaps she carried him off to look at a Corot or Whistler in the next room.

Another round of the long Valse and one perceives that old Herr Joachim and his quartette have come in after a concert, and Mrs. Tallboys takes him down to the dining-room to sup with the *élite* of his English musical circle of adorers.

One steps with a little more freedom for the absence of the elderly and eminent. Many members of the younger generation of this circle, "faithless and perverse" just like any other generation, wanted to get out of the atmosphere in which they were brought up. This seems to be a general rule and not confined to any particular generation; and it is no conclusive criticism of the receding period. Our elders, after all, had won all their refined and graceful art and sounded the high noble note of poetry and symbolism, through rebellion against philistine ugliness and the narrow terrors of an outworn evangelical creed. And now here were many contrary young creatures already feeling they were simmering in a syrup. They were just beginning to seek for fresh values, telling each other that they were stifled by emphatic and misty gush and "couleur de rose" rapture. But at present there was only a dissatisfied groping for fresh expression.

Manners were still good. The arrogance which perhaps became a necessity of self-assertion for a while, and has been a decided characteristic of the first twenty years of the twentieth century, had not yet come into fashion—piquant in a very few, vile in the pretentious. Some bold and definite spirits of this set had already declared they wouldn't have their roots growing in drawing-room flower-pots any longer; they were all for "Beachcombing," whatever that might mean; just a few disappeared. Count Tolstoi was beginning to make a profound disturbance with his exposition of Christianity. Since the Great War many people have found it easy enough to turn a fork in a potato patch, from choice or necessity; but even Count Tolstoi himself, as a pioneer, in the nineteenth century, found himself balked by his wife's gardeners—so the difficulties of these young rebels can be imagined. Tolstoi's youthful followers were many, but they were all baffled by the ease, comfort, and established order of the nineteenth century. Many young women, intending to become artists and writers, were beginning to feel the need of opportunities and independence. In contrast, however, to such tentative seekers, there were also a number of young Philistines among the dancers who thought all the future artists, poets, men of letters of this circle, outsiders. They were intending themselves to find a more conventional set as soon as possible, having a great respect for will-power, but a horror of the Imagination.

But I am not thinking, of course, of these things in the whirl of the Valse. The Joachim quartette have by this time demolished several cold fowls and boot-shaped tongues, and it is time for the dancers to swarm down to the dining-room.

And now, at this distance of time, I hear a faint popping of corks, and laughter at the "flash" of talk that passes across the little supper-tables in the tapestried room; I remember rapid exchanges of confidences with intimate cousins; a light tap with a fan on a shoulder, drawing their attention. I feel the absorption of happy lovers, or the hidden tragedies of men loving and not loved, or of young girls loving and not loved; sentimental Valse music tearing at their hearts.

The bright trivial animation of the ball-room I cannot reproduce. I feel it is muffled now, faded, and ghostly.

Once when I passed with my children by the door of Mrs. Tallboys' high house, I suddenly remembered a spring afternoon when a famous singer at the piano carolled, as though one with the nightingales and thrushes, in the romantic manner so abandonedly enjoyed by her nineteenth-century audience, who as they listened then were gazing vaguely out among the leaves and spreading branches of the great chestnut tree in the Square garden.

"Wait! The house we are passing is full of ghosts to me," I said to the children. They attended for a second with their ball lifted—then thought better of hearing me out—threw their ball before them and ran off.

So I never speak of my memories as I pass the house now, with whomever I may be; I know I shall not be able adequately to reanimate the shades, and shall only be a bore. But in silence, and just for myself, I like to pass again in mind through the door and up the marble stairs, and find Mrs. Tallboys among her cabinets and damask; Mr. Henry James and all her idealistic, romantic, highly sophisticated, delicate-minded contemporaries.

When the ball is over, "Who were the blots?" Mrs. Tallboys asks an intimate friend as she comes back into her emptied room, having said good-night to most of her guests. Though gracious and romantic, Mrs. Tallboys is also satirical.

Adela and I, animated and dishevelled, still a little out of breath after the last extra, get into our hansom and say good-night to Fitzgerald.

As the horse trots gently through the London dawn, we begin to yawn and feel a great fatigue; then we lie back in our corner silent; two puppets limp on their strings after the drama is ended.

SCIENCE

EUGENICS AND SOCIAL REFORMS.

By J. B. S. HALDANE.

PERHAPS the greatest tragedy of our age is the misapplication of science. It is notorious that the principal result of many increases in human power and knowledge has been either an improvement in methods of destroying human life and property or an accentuation of economic inequality. This is largely the fault of the confused thinking of "advanced" politicians. I refer to mental processes such as that which led to our forgoing the use of "mustard gas," the most humane weapon ever invented, since of the casualties it caused, 2.6 per cent. died, and $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. were permanently incapacitated. No one at Washington even suggested abandoning H.E. and shrapnel, which kill or maim about half their casualties. Save for the fact that it was only preventive medicine which rendered practicable the large concentrations of troops in the great war, biological progress has been little exploited for human hurt. But the growing science of heredity is being used in this country to support the political opinions of the extreme right, and in America by some of the most ferocious enemies of human liberty. And yet it seems likely that the facts, in so far as they are applicable to politics at all, would warrant conclusions of an entirely different nature from

those which have so far been drawn, and which have made eugenics abhorrent to many democrats.

The relevant facts fall into two classes, first those which relate to hereditary abnormalities or tendencies to disease, and secondly those bearing on the inheritance of intelligence and the different birth-rate in different social classes. The former are comparatively unimportant. Some, like certain types of eye malady, are transmitted only by affected people to about half their children. It is on the whole undesirable that they should beget their like; but before we begin curtailing the liberties of people already sufficiently unfortunate, we should first try to impress on them their duty to restrict their families, and to see that they have the means to do so.

Other hereditary troubles, apparently including much feeble-mindedness, are mainly transmitted by unaffected people, and not necessarily by affected. If every feeble-minded person were sterilized, hundreds of generations would be needed to eliminate hereditary feeble-mindedness. The question of whether a feeble-minded girl should be allowed to produce an indefinite number of bastards ought to be settled on the same grounds as any other social problem. Such a woman is quite as likely to harm her contemporaries by transmitting venereal disease, and her children by negligence, as to be responsible for the idiocy of future generations. And in particular any legislation which does not purport to apply, and is not actually applied (a very different thing), to all social classes alike, will probably be applied unjustly to the poor.

But hereditary deaf-mutism and feeble-mindedness, though serious evils, are not menaces to national existence, and it is claimed that this is the case with the differential birth-rate in different classes. We must first examine the question how far heredity rather than environment is responsible for the mental differences between the children of different social classes. The question cannot be answered on *a priori* grounds. To take a simple case, illiteracy in England is mainly determined by congenital weak-mindedness, in India by parental poverty. The problem has been attacked along many lines. For example, tests such as the memorizing of arbitrary forms or the time taken to sort out cards of five different colours from a mixture showed as great differences between the children of members of the professional classes and the equally well-fed and healthy children of middle-class parents of similar incomes, as between the latter and the children of the poor. Again, within schools drawn from a fairly homogeneous population the correlation between brothers or sisters with regard to intellectual performance was just the same as that with regard to eye-colour, which certainly does not depend on environment. Finally, we have the cases of "identical" twins, who have the same hereditary make-up, and are almost or quite indistinguishable physically. Perhaps the best example of the extraordinary similarity of their mental processes is the well-authenticated story of the pair who were brought before their headmaster for making the same mistake in a mathematical examination, and were able to prove that they had been in different rooms at the time!

All investigators are agreed that mental capacity is strongly hereditary, though, as with stature, environment plays a part in its determination. Of course, two fools may produce a genius, or two dwarfs a giant, but such cases are the exception. It is also agreed that among the poorer nine-tenths of the population the abler members on the whole tend to rise into a richer class than their parents. This is not so among the rich, where the more intelligent are commonly content with incomes of £1,000-2,000, though even here the converse holds, and fools and their money are soon parted. Finally, there is no doubt that the richer classes breed much more slowly than the poorer, and that this is not compensated for by lower infantile mortality. A thousand married teachers under fifty-five annually beget ninety-five children, a thousand doctors 103, carpenters 150, general labourers 267. Thus the unskilled workers are breeding much faster than the skilled classes, and in view of the demands for intellectual and manual skill in modern

civilization, this is an evil. The Eugenics Education Society have doubtless done good work in persuading a certain number of intelligent people that it is their duty to have more children. They have also rightly urged lessened taxation of parents of children. But many of their members have coupled this with a clamour against measures designed to ameliorate the lot of the children of the poor at the expense of the rich. It is a curious policy to combat evils due to economic inequality by perpetuating that inequality.

The main reasons for the differential birth-rate seem to be three. First, persons who have money to spend on the education of their children and a prospect of providing them with substantial sums as legacies, marriage settlements, and the like, restrict their families in the interests of individual children. It therefore follows that any measures which tend to disseminate heritable property among the poor, such as the breaking up of large estates, are eugenically desirable. So are drastic improvements in our elementary education and in our scholarship system. The average doctor would probably beget at least one more child if he could be sure that his children would be satisfactorily educated at State or State-aided schools, and that there were sufficient scholarships available to enable any child of intelligence appreciably above the average to enjoy a cheap university education. If I attached the importance to eugenics which certain people claim to do, I should, I think, be bound to advocate the complete abolition of hereditary property, and the free and compulsory attendance of all children at State schools. At any rate, all legislation tending in these directions must be regarded as eugenic.

Secondly, the poor do not know how to restrict their families by artificial means, and their overcrowding renders marital continence and even preventive measures very difficult. The eugenist must therefore approve of better housing schemes, and of all movements designed to spread a knowledge of birth-control among the poor. Thirdly, a certain section of the poor are extremely improvident, and do not consider the consequences of their actions. This leads to poverty on the one hand and large families on the other. But this section probably do not possess any great desire for children, which is, after all, one of the most respectable and unselfish of the elementary human desires. If a knowledge of birth-control were universally diffused I am inclined to believe that they would produce considerably less children than their more provident neighbours, who mostly possess much stronger parental instincts.

Finally, there is a group of causes of a more subtle nature. For example, the women of the richer classes probably suffer unduly in childbirth from lack of previous exercise of a suitable character, and also tend to restrict their families on account of other competing interests. In other words, rich women need more exercise, and poor women more education. Again, those who have risen in the economic scale by their intelligence are often cut off by differences of tradition from partners of the class into which they have risen, by differences of intelligence and education from that of their parents. Class-consciousness is dysgenic in a society possessing a social ladder.

It will be seen, then, that the differential birth-rate is very largely determined by social inequalities of a type already recognized and deplored. If these were remedied the main characters favoured by selection would be health and strong parental instincts instead of—as now—the type of mental equipment which prevents a man from becoming well-to-do.

Just the same argument applies to racial problems. It was only the emancipation of the negroes which saved the United States from twice its present black population. This event gave them access to alcohol, venereal diseases, and consumption. Their rate of increase slowed down at once, and it is only between the last two censuses that the absolute excess of negro births over deaths once more equalled that in the decade before the Civil War. In the Northern States and in all towns the negro death-rate exceeds the birth-rate. If in the interests of racial purity all negroes were expelled from north of the Mason-Dixon line the proportion of blacks to whites in the

whole Union would be markedly increased within a generation. And prohibition has probably been of far greater benefit to blacks than whites. Those who are convinced of the superiority of Europeans to Indians may console themselves with the thought that a British withdrawal from India would cause a very rapid decrease by war and famine in the number of Indians, and remove any danger of the indianization of other parts of the Empire.

To sum up, the rational programme for a eugenist is as follows: Teach voluntary eugenics by all means, but if you desire to check the increase of any population or section of a population, either massacre it or force upon it the greatest practicable amount of liberty, education, and wealth. Civilization stands in real danger from overproduction of "undermen." But if it perishes from this cause it will be because its governing class cared more for wealth than for justice.

THE DRAMA

SHAKESPEARE ONCE AGAIN.

The Regent Theatre: "Romeo and Juliet."

A VAGUE hopefulness attended the latest revival of "Romeo and Juliet." There was a new set of actors, and almost a new producer, the last thing but one in décor, and we were going to cut with a whole lot of bad old tradition. What a bright prospect for that promising infant, the new English theatre!

Certainly the revival has its points. Miss Ffrangcon-Davies is quite one of our best Shakespearian actresses. Some people will remember her with pleasure as the Queen in "Edward II.", and her Cordelia did much to redeem a ghastly performance of "King Lear." She is one of the very few people on the stage who can break up blank verse without losing all control over the rhythm. Then we were told that in real life Romeo was only nineteen. That was certainly a comfort, and perhaps everybody else would scramble through somehow. Miss Ffrangcon-Davies did not disappoint her admirers, when she had her own way, which was not sufficiently often. She was hardly ever allowed to go straight ahead, but was continually being stopped, to walk about the room, sob, and be generally hysterical. Romeo, who looked in the flesh a fine strapping young fellow, also passed an excessive amount of time in tears. Still he was a great improvement on the epicene ephebe who is usually served up to us. Both got through the balcony scene very creditably, and Miss Davies, especially in the scenes with her nurse, was delightfully childish and gamine. She did the phial scene admirably. But the slowness of the whole affair was portentous. Within certain limits a producer can do what he likes. But one quality is essential to any performance of "Romeo and Juliet"—speed. The play must go with a rush. For all its lyric ecstacy, there is something earthy and primitive about it. Children turn into grown-up people before our eyes and crash indifferently to their marriage or their deathbed. But at the Regent, though we were only allowed one miserable interval of ten minutes,

"the two hours' traffic of the stage"

was lengthened out into a good three hours and a half despite considerable cuts. These cuts were made, no doubt, out of a respect for the *convenances*; nevertheless such cutting destroys the balance of the characters. There is an unusual amount of bawdy talk in "Romeo and Juliet," but it is inserted intentionally, not merely because Shakespeare, sage prophet though he was, had a deplorably bawdy mind. It is intended to stress the simple elementary cheerful passions of the young sparks in the play. To leave it all out gives the play a false tone. It sentimentalizes it. This production dripped in sentiment. There was a faint aroma of Liberty silk all over it. Everything—lighting, scenery,

costumes—wore the air of mild pink or mild blue. The fierce raging young animals, who swept through Verona, had all their claws pared for them by the civilized respectable producer. The acrid flavour had vanished.

There were other disappointments. The performance, despite an air of being up to date, was conventional. Friar Laurence, in particular, that supple, shrewd, foreseeing, active priest, was made to behave like a gibbering idiot with one foot in the grave, whose hand so shook that he seemed likely to drop everything he touched. The word-sick Mercutio was hardly a success. His famous speech—

"Oh! then I see Queen Mab hath been with you,"

was delivered as a series of happy thoughts, punctuated at intervals with "cheers and laughter" from his admiring companions. The nurse was the preposterous crone of tradition, while many of the minor characters were frankly inaudible.

There is a theory that none of these things matter as long as Romeo and Juliet are more or less satisfactory. That may be the superficial impression left by reading the play—but not when seeing it on the stage. As a matter of fact they are singularly suppressed characters, and a great deal of the action takes place without them. The city of Verona and its intestine brawls are as important as the lovers. The Veronese do not lose their high spirit with their early youth, and peace can be only brought to their streets by the death of their fairest. This is not a mere expression of opinion. It is bluntly stated in the prologue, which is a very important feature of the play. The prologue, which should be shouted out with the fine frenzy which is to be the atmosphere of the play, also indicates where the centre of the matter lies. "Romeo and Juliet" loses its unity owing to the bad nineteenth-century passion for "star parts," and we shall not see a decent production of it till as much care has been spent on the lesser people of Verona as on the "pair of star-crossed lovers."

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA

PIRANDELLO'S "Henry IV." is to be performed at Cambridge by the A.D.C. in the club's own theatre on weekday evenings from June 7th-14th at 8.45 p.m.; and a special *matinée* will be given at 2 p.m. on Friday, June 13th, to enable visitors with evening engagements in London to catch the 4.48 p.m. train back to town. This announcement will come as a welcome surprise both to the many who will avail themselves of this, the first, opportunity of seeing in England one of the most interesting of modern plays, and to the few who, more familiar with University May Week usages, have in the past been accustomed to productions, often indeed amusing, but generally hackneyed. Perhaps a suspicion may have dawned on the club's committee that May Week audiences, however frivolous, may possibly prefer the original production of a masterpiece to a more or less stale *réchauffé* of some inferior play already too familiar to them on the London stage. For most critics will agree that the amateur's success is proportionate to his ambition: the average modern drawing-room comedy demands a technique rare in the amateur, while plays of poetry and imagination demand a sincerity, a degree of intelligence, and a disinterestedness yet rarer in the professional.

The general impression of the exhibition of "Selected Pictures by British and Foreign Artists" at the French Gallery (120, Pall Mall), is one of respectable and competent dullness. The majority of the pictures are by nineteenth-century Dutch artists—William and James Maris, Bosboom, Israels, and Scherrewitz, and by lesser-known French painters of the same period, including Lhermitte and Harpignies. There is a rather poor Corot, and a Boudin ("Bordeaux Harbour," 38) which, though not one of his best works, looks distinguished among the

mediocre pictures which surround it. The same can be said of the two Bosbooms (5 and 14); the latter especially, "The Sermon," though minute in size, is exquisitely painted and has a fine purity of colour. The landscapes of Scherrewitz are skilful, but not very interesting: his "On the Beach" (40) is a very pleasant piece of painting. There are also a few more modern pictures included, a rather vulgar portrait of Miss Maggie Teyte by Sir John Lavery, paintings by Glyn Philpot and D. Y. Cameron, and some water-colours of Italy by H. B. Brabazon, one of which (Italian Villa, 48) has considerable charm, slight though it is.

Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, May 31. Franciszek Goldenberg, Pianoforte Recital, at 3, at Æolian Hall.

"The Niebelungs," German Film, at Albert Hall.
"Yoicks," at Kingsway.

Sunday, June 1. "The Old Bachelor," Phoenix Society, at Regent Theatre.

"The Lucky One," R.A.D.A. ex-students, at R.A.D.A. Theatre.

Moiseiwitch, at 3, at Queen's Hall.

Monday, June 2. Marguerite D'Alvarez, at 8.15, at Queen's Hall.

Arnold Trowell, Violoncello Recital, at 8.30, at Wigmore Hall.

Tuesday, June 3. "London Life," at Drury Lane.

Thursday, June 5. B.N.O.C. season starts with "The Marriage of Figaro," at His Majesty's.

"The Great Adventure," at the Haymarket.

Drawings and Paintings by Sydney H. Sime, at the St. George's Gallery.

Schioler, Pianoforte Recital, at Steinway Hall.

OMICRON.

POETRY

HORSES.

THOSE lumbering horses in the steady plough,
On the brown field—I wonder why, just now,
They seemed so terrible, so wild and strange,
Like magic power on the stony grange.

Perhaps some childish hour has come again,
When I watched fearful through the blackening rain
Their hooves like pistons in an ancient mill
Move up and down, yet seem as standing still.

Their conquering hooves which trod the stubble down
Were ritual which turned the field to brown,
And their great hulks were seraphim of gold,
Or mute ecstatic monsters on the mould.

And oh, the rapture when, one furrow done,
They marched broad-breasted to the sinking sun!
The light flowed off their bossy sides in flakes,
The furrows rolled behind like struggling snakes.

But when at dusk with steaming nostrils home
They came, they seemed gigantic in the gloam,
And warm and glowing with mysterious fire
Which lit their smouldering bodies on the mire.

Their eyes as brilliant and as wide as night
Gleamed with a cruel apocalyptic sight.
Their manes the leaping ire of the wind
Lifted with rage invisible and blind.

Ah! now it fades! it fades! and I must pine
Again for that dread country crystalline,
Where the blank field and the still-standing tree
Were bright and fearful presences to me.

EDWIN MUIR.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE APOTHEOSIS OF TORYISM.

BEING neither a Tory nor a Whig, neither a Conservative nor a Liberal, I flatter myself that I approached Mr. Maurice Woods's "A History of the Tory Party" (Hodder & Stoughton, 16s.) with that commendable, but for a journalist uncomfortable, disposition which we call an open mind. I found the book extremely interesting, but only because the subject of political psychology or of the psychology of politics happens to be a peculiar hobby of mine. The book itself is a bad book; its interpretation of history is flashy, and more often than not unsound; the author's outlook can sometimes only be described with accuracy as "silly"; his style is repetitive and slovenly. But it would be wrong to be too severe on poor Mr. Woods; one gathers that he started with a handicap, for his dedication runs: "To the Right Hon. Lord Beaverbrook who gave me the leisure to write this book." A "History of the Tory Party," written under the shadow of that pillar of latter-day Toryism, could scarcely fail to bear upon its surface some traces of its inspiration, the inspiration which issues so purely and so copiously in the well of Toryism undefiled of the "Daily Express" and "Evening Standard." As Mr. Woods himself remarks in the expected lyrical purple patch with which he ends his book, the Tory Party, when it "emerged from the war," had brought within its "original concept" "every new element in social life at home and in racial possessions beyond the seas," and had "taken the new weapons without putting off the old armour." One has a vision of Bolingbroke, Pitt, and Dizzy learning from Lord Beaverbrook how to wield the tomahawk.

* * *

It is a pity that the book is not a better one. A good history of the Tory Party, or indeed of any great political party, would be extraordinarily fascinating. Nor would I have any objection to its being written by a Tory. Our political history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been written mainly by Whigs, or the spiritual descendants of Whigs, and Mr. Woods is perfectly right to try to correct the distortion of our historical vision which we get from looking at the past through the pages of Macaulay and Lecky. I should not object to the new version of history having a Tory distortion of its own; only that distortion must be at least as good as the old Whiggish one. We are not going to give up the brilliant "interpretations" of Macaulay, if all that we are offered in their place is the blurred brilliancy of the "Daily Express."

* * *

Mr. Woods, on the penultimate page of his book, writes: "So that this history may end without any fear of self-contradiction with the question it asked in the first chapter, What is Toryism? What part does it play in the life of the race or the nation?" The muddle in this statement is characteristic; people do not contradict themselves by asking, but by answering questions. However, it was precisely those two questions which I had hoped to find answered in this book, for the real interest in the history of a political party is the idea or ideas, if such exist, which lie behind it, which are large enough and general enough to survive from generation to genera-

tion and from century to century, and which, though they change on the surface under the impact of particular events, have an unchanging core which serves as an ideal or an attraction to some people in each succeeding generation. Mr. Woods does, indeed, in his own curious way, try to answer the questions. The Tory Party, he tells us, was conceived at the Restoration with three great principles: patriotism, loyalty to the Crown, and a passion for the Established Church. In some mystic but not clearly explained way, I gather from his final chapter, these three principles remain—expanded by our racial possessions beyond the seas—the guiding principles of Mr. Baldwin and the party which he leads, and of the Toryism which Lord Beaverbrook expounds in his newspapers. Reading Mr. Woods's detailed interpretation of history, I find that Toryism in its crusade of two and a half centuries in defence of these great principles, has acquired—and sometimes lost again—certain minor or less fundamental principles. It is true, for instance, that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Tories were usually opposed to participation in European wars, and Mr. Woods sometimes seems to imply that anyone who prefers peace to war must be by instinct a Tory. The view is untenable, unless you mean by Toryism nothing more than a party label. By instinct a Tory, as Mr. Woods has to admit, is a Nationalist. He is always rather in favour of a good war—provided it does not last too long. The history of nineteenth-century Toryism proves this clearly, and Mr. Woods does not extricate himself from his dilemma by explaining that the Tories learnt to think imperially from Pitt, and that by instinct they like fighting on the sea and hate fighting in Flanders. After the Revolution the early Tories opposed, and the early Whigs supported, war, because the one was against, and the other in favour of, the Crown, and the price of the Crown's favour was the voting of men and money for its wars. That there was no connection here between policy and principle is shown by the fact that, when Walpole and the Whigs were all out for peace, Bolingbroke and the Tories veered round and were in favour of war.

* * *

The strangest chapter in Mr. Woods's book is one headed "The Philosophy of Toryism." In it he explains that the fundamental principle of Toryism is dynamic and progressive, of Liberalism and Radicalism static. It is curious that he never once refers to the most fundamental principle of Toryism—the great principle of vested interests. The Tory Party has always consisted of or attracted those who possessed or supported some vested interest. At first it was the Crown and the Church. The Tories supported the Stuarts against William because the Stuart Crown was a vested interest. When the Hanoverian Crown had itself become a vested interest, they changed over and supported the Georges. They rallied the country and the landlords against the town and new commercial classes of the industrial revolution. When these commercial and industrial classes had themselves developed vested interests, they rallied to Toryism against the nineteenth-century proletariat. To-day Beer and Protection are both Tory.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

WILLIAM BLAKE.

William Blake: his Philosophy and Symbols. By S. FOSTER DAMON. (Constable. 42s.)

WHEN the present writer, fifty years ago, had for the first time the honour of writing about Blake in a review of Mr. W. M. Rossetti's edition of the "Poems," he seems to have had the flippancy to speak of "that conjectural interpretation which, if it does nothing else, sharpens the wits of the interpreter." Even then, in the few years since the resurrection of the poet-painter-mystic at the hands of the Gilchris, Dante Rossetti, and Mr. Swinburne, there had been a good deal of such interpretation going on: and perhaps some wicked readers had remembered that the process of sharpening, unskillfully conducted, sometimes blunts rather than sharpens. Since 1874, and especially since 1893, when there appeared what we must, it seems, call "EY"—that is to say, the complete or nearly complete issue of all the work by Messrs. Ellis and Yeats—there has been more: and in the last decade or two it would seem most of all. Indeed, it may be admitted that influences, more or less parallel to those which certainly worked on Blake himself, have recently been likely to work on commentators of him.

To this process of conjectural interpretation Mr. Damon's book, containing nearly five hundred large octavo pages of close-printed text with no extensive extracts, is a very considerable contribution; and, let us add at once, a very respectable one, though the extent to which people may agree with his methods and his results will, of course, differ very widely in individual cases, and indeed in whole groups or classes of readers. His interest is not limited to Blake's mysticism, symbolism, or, as he calls it, philosophy. He is not copious on the pictorial side, but he speaks of it with sufficient appreciation and understanding. He is fuller on the poetical, to which he pays a good deal of attention, even extending that attention to the technique, in praise-worthy fashion but with a rather imperfect terminology. "Tetrameter" and "pentameter" in the common school-book solecisms, for our English four-foot and five-foot lines, are bad enough, but what on earth is a *nonameter*? Browning's monk was rude when he asked what was the Greek name for swine's snout; but without any rudeness we may gently remark that the Greek name for "nine" is not *novem*. Yet these things are to Mr. Damon mere Courts of the Gentiles—if not, indeed, places of some delusion and temptation. He admits the unearthly beauty, for instance, of the "Sunflower" fragment: but is rather afraid of its "soporific" effect—of its making men content with the poetry and disinclining them from inquiries into the esoteric, symbolic, "philosophical" meaning. And though he has allowed himself a sort of confession and avoidance on the great battle-question of madness, he is obviously not a little disgusted with those who urge—even with those who allow, without being in the least troubled by their own allowance—that Blake was not, in the ordinary sense, quite sane.

On this last point a very few words must suffice. Some at least of those who ever since they first knew him have ranked Blake highest might say, in something like a poor copy of his own imagery and language, that seven stars of the better Madness adorned Blake's head: Furor Poeticus, the first in magnitude and beauty; Furor Graphicus sometimes in hardly less; Furor Politicus, subdued later and passing into Furor Pacificus; Furor Onomasticus and Chorographicus, the one Ossianic, the other Swedenborgian in origin; with, first and last of all and most pervading, Furor Eroticus, neither baleful nor blameful in practice, whatever it might be in theory, as regards that other Saint Catherine, his wife; but, as it always is more or less, and here especially, outside pure sanity.

Now to attempt, with the utterances of a man under these influences and possessed besides by the queer Puckish intermittent humour which is certainly not least at home just over the border of regular sanity, to make a philosophy out of them is, to say the least, hardy, without in the least implying that it is foolhardy. At the fancy—and more than fancy—bred things called Mysticism, Symbolism, &c., only very dull dogs will sneer.

"The petty Known, the Unknown vast," is no bad adaptation of a certain line: and the ambition of excursion from the one to the other by these roads is no base thing. But it is a rather more than risky thing, and a more than rather uncertain. It is not, one hopes, ungenerous to lay a little stress on a frank confession of Mr. Damon's that he is going to work over some of his own interpretation again: and, in quite another place, on his statement that a brother Blakosophist is actually doing so with *his* version. The fact is that an alert interpreter might put on passages of the prophetic books one, two, half a dozen, or more interpretations; while on whole works as wholes it is at least temerarious to put any single interpretation at all. Blake, says Mr. Damon shrewdly enough—for there is plenty of shrewdness in the book, oddly as it may seem to have niched itself there—could not tell a story. In other words, he was, outside lyric, and sometimes even there, deficient in the power of composition. One may think that he would have shown it best in the unlucky and too generally pooh-poohed "French Revolution," while "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," which for some reason Mr. Damon does not seem to like as much as most of us do, has a sort of decomposed composition which is rather fascinating. But if anybody can get any real whole out of the "great epics," as they call them, he is cleverer than the present writer—which, indeed, is quite possible.

Nevertheless, we have read Mr. Damon's book with pleasure and profit. It is rather ingeniously divided into two parts. First comes a connected survey of Blake's life and writings, shaping a philosophy for him as it goes on; and then a set of commentaries dealing line by line (almost in both senses) with the actual texts and their decorations. It is a really useful "Companion to Blake." Only if Mr. Damon does rewrite it, or if it comes as it stands to a second edition, let us request him to delete two things—only two words, indeed. He calls in one place Sir Thomas Browne a "pedant." Now no one who does that will ever get out of Ulro, or be caught up into Golgonooza. Secondly, he says that Southey "sneers" at Blake. Southey does nothing of the kind. In the passages of "The Doctor," which long before the general resurrection brought the present writer to knowledge and adoration of the "Mad Song" and to knowledge of and delight in the "Catalogue" and the "Ghost of a Flea," Southey does use the words "great but insane genius," "great and erratic genius"; and he does, speaking less wisely, say of Blake's Arthurian picture that it is "one of his worst, which is saying a good deal." But Mr. Damon himself is very cautious in speaking of Blake's work in limning; a twice-repeated attribution, "great genius," is a very odd kind of "sneer"; and "very curious and original" for the long quotation from the "Catalogue" is almost as queer a one; while the Spanish passage with which is introduced the "Song" insists again on that combination of "difficulty" and "interest" which is one of Blake's greatest attractions. It has long been a fashion to sneer at Southey himself, and he had plenty of weak points. But to genius, especially if neglected, he was one of the most generous critics we have ever had. And for bringing knowledge of Blake (as he must have done in many more important cases than that just mentioned) during the darkest of the Days of Ignorance, he surely deserves credit rather than censure.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

THE LAST OF THE PURITANS.

Dr. John Clifford, C.H.: Life, Letters, and Reminiscences. By Sir JAMES MARCHANT. (Cassell. 12s. 6d.)

It is only about six months since Dr. Clifford died, and his figure is still too near to us, therefore, for it to be seen in anything like final perspective. Some day another, and a better, biography will be written. Meanwhile, Sir James Marchant has set down, artlessly but conscientiously, the main facts of the Doctor's life, with ample selections from his correspondence. The book has been hastily produced, and suffers in consequence. There is considerable overlapping of the chapters, and this does not make for easy reading. The picture offered us is, however, authoritative and intimate, and it cannot fail to appeal to all readers

interested in the religious and social history of the period which it covers.

The story of John Clifford carries us back to the beginning of Victoria's reign. He was born in 1836 at Sawley, near Derby. His parents were very poor, but very upright. They both came of Calvinistic stock; but, while his father represented the sterner and more rigid aspect of Puritanism, his mother exhibited its "gentler and more joyous side." At a very early age John rode daily on the back of his large dog to the small Baptist school in the village, of which his only memory in later years was the heavy punishment for upsetting an ink-bottle. After brief periods of schooling in other villages to which his parents moved, he was put to work, at the age of twelve, in a lace factory at Beeston, near Nottingham. His working hours were sixteen a day, with two intervals of half an hour for eating the bread and cheese sent in from his home. His dexterity in his merely mechanical task of helping a man to mind two machines became such that he soon found it possible to read Emerson's "Essays," given him by a Sunday School teacher, as he plied finger and thumb. This habit brought him into conflict with the factory authorities. But John gained the victory, and it was a very significant one.

In 1850 came his "conversion," and it was characteristic of him that this event should have brought with it a new and deep joy in the beauty of Nature. To the end Clifford remained an "evangelical," but his evangelicalism was never of the narrow and exclusive type. It never turned in upon itself and became "other-worldly"; but, as its zeal grew, it found itself coming, through an ever increasing number of channels, into closer relationship with life. After a period of village preaching, followed by a course of training at a Baptist Academy in Leicester—always to him "that Midland Jerusalem"—he received a "call" to Praed Street (afterwards Westbourne Park) Chapel, to which, declining many more lucrative opportunities, he devoted the rest of his life. He showed at the age of twenty-three a remarkable maturity of mind:—

"The address which he gave at the first annual meeting after his recognition as a pastor is fresh and ripe in judgment as regards the true fundamentals of progressive outlook to-day. He started his ministry asking for, and claiming, 'More Room' for the forward-looking minds of his day, and the spirit of George Rawson's hymn, 'We limit not the truth of God to our poor reach of mind,' was as his meat and drink."

During the early years of his pastorate, Clifford not only raised a small "cause" of eighty members into a large and flourishing church, with a wide range of social activities in many of which he was the pioneer, but he found time to study at University College and to take degrees in science as well as theology. He was, moreover, a pastor in the true sense, not merely preaching to his people, but making their individual needs, joys, and sorrows his own. Sir James Marchant reproduces many of Clifford's letters to the famous political and religious leaders—including Gladstone, Lord Morley, W. T. Stead, and Mr. Lloyd George—with whom his long career brought him into contact. But the cream of his correspondence is that addressed to obscure members of his own "flock," and especially to children and young people.

Dr. Clifford was often condemned for mingling politics with religion. For him, however, there was no possible divorce between the two, and, since his convictions fell naturally into a Radical mould, he was not the kind of man to screen the fact by any verbal subtleties. Sir James Marchant follows, largely by means of the protagonist's own letters, the long battle which Clifford waged on behalf of democracy, education, and liberty of conscience, and Clifford's personality lends a human interest even to-day to such a remote and purely denominational issue as the "Down Grade" controversy. This occurred in 1887-9, during his Vice-Presidency and Presidency of the Baptist Union. It began with allegations made by C. H. Spurgeon of alarming heterodoxy in the church. Like an Old Testament prophet in earnestness and eloquence, Spurgeon "cried aloud and spared not"; but, while he held his case to be "proved," he refused to advance evidence. The situation called for masterly handling, and Clifford showed himself capable of it. Without sacrificing anything to the reactionaries, he

achieved, by a miracle of tact and patience, a satisfactory unity and reconciliation:—

"Dr. Clifford's attitude throughout his term of office brings out a side of his character exemplified in this biography, but which was too little appreciated by the general public. He was a doughty fighter on the platform, but the mildest of men in personal intercourse; and usually most conciliatory and tactful on a committee or in consultation. He was opulent and adventurous in speech, but no man was better able to hold his peace. He could suppress himself whenever he chose, and for any length of time. When patience was needed for such a cause as Baptist unity, nothing could wear him out or provoke him into rashness, and when silence was required, no lever could open his lips."

In Dr. Clifford, indeed, the sterner and the gentler elements of Puritanism which he inherited from his parents were admirably blended; and he has left behind him the memory of a life of indefatigable, honest, and loving service unsurpassed in the annals of his time.

GILBERT THOMAS.

ESSAYS.

Last Essays. By MAURICE HEWLETT. (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.)

Thoughts in Prose and Verse. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. (Watts. 5s.)

Purple Hours. By PHILIP MACER-WRIGHT. With a Foreword by G. K. CHESTERTON. (Gay & Hancock. 5s.)

MR. HEWLETT'S essays are a delight to read because, for one reason, they appear to have been written so easily. You cannot imagine him "reading up" for any of them. He scatters his largesse in the royal style of Ruskin's image of Charity, "riding through a town like a Commander of the Faithful having any quantity of sequins and ducats in saddle-bags, and throwing them round in radiant showers and hailing handfals, with more bags to brace on when those are empty." For one thing that he tells you, you feel there are a hundred that he could tell you if he liked. His stores of knowledge seem inexhaustible. But the *savant* that was in him never hid the man.

He knew how to enjoy life. His book is full of good things, because he knew where to find the good things of life. Enjoyment to him was an art, one which he had cultivated to a rare degree. *Ennui* he had put to utter rout, it would seem. From reading the Bible down to glimpsing through lighted windows, he relishes everything, and with seemingly labourless, yet unerring, art he finds the felicitous phrase which will make you relish it. And he knows the very moment to stop, so that you will long for more.

Sometimes one feels regretful that he was not less reticent. There is an essay, all too brief, on "Happiness in the Village." A great deal will have to be said in the coming years about the status of the agricultural labourer. It is a national loss that Hewlett did not live to have the saying of some of it. He knew so well what he was talking about: he had insight and courage. Take two small things, as they may seem, though large in their implications, upon which he has something to say worth attention—the motor reaping-machine and the motor charabanc. Hewlett said, as he knew, what denser and weaker men neither say nor know, that you could not have a real harvest with the one, nor see the country from the other. It is the essays about the country that are the best. Those about books, delightful as they are, have their limitations. There is one though—it is on Ballad-origins—which for critical acumen it would be hard to match in all that has ever been written on the subject. But come to this in an essay on "Endings": "No better poet than Homer ever lived, no better ending to an epic was ever made than that to the 'Iliad,' whose last book shows Achilles, for once, generous. . . . Its very last line is remarkable, because it shows that the interest of poet and hearers alike had shifted during the progress of the poem." One cannot help feeling that Hewlett had missed by a hair's breadth, which in these matters is as good as a mile, perceiving how great the "Iliad" really is.

Mr. Hewlett's book is soothing: Mr. Phillpotts's is stimulating. It breathes forth an atmosphere which is so tonic in quality that one is tempted to prescribe his book for everybody. I speak of his prose, not his verse. For though his verse is always simple, sincere, and thoughtful, its

rhythms are wooden. (His best poem is "The Fruit of the Tree.") He is better at that other harmony of prose, into which he puts more wit and poetry than into his verse. He is a master of persiflage. When he ceases to be self-conscious he can be very humorous, as in "A Sidelight on the Fall," and very finely earnest, as in "An Aspect of Pessimism." His philosophy surely is by no means final. He is a Rationalist, but he is a reasonable Rationalist, because, though he may not think it, he builds his philosophy on Reason *plus* something else. He is very unreasonable, however, if he wants to substitute a cosmogony founded on the Darwinian Theory for the first chapters of Genesis, which even in Mr. Phillpotts's delightfully comic version of them contain deeper truth than a hundred scientific theories; the great myths always do. It would be interesting to have Mr. Phillpotts's considered opinion on *Æschylus* and on Dante. Still, Rationalism is an excellent destructive of drowsiness of intellect. Mr. Phillpotts's book should become a classic birthday present for country parsons.

Mr. Macer-Wright's little volume is meant to be full of smiles and happy thoughts. Really it is a very sad book; it contrasts curiously with Hewlett's "Last Essays." Hewlett knew how and where to enjoy himself. He had the immense advantage of living in the country. Mr. Macer-Wright apparently strives to keep up his feverish being in the smoke and stir of London. His essays are brave, but ill-fated attempts to find some joy in the circles of this Inferno. He has a marvellous facility of style, but how superficial he is!—except in one notable article, "The Devil's Chaplet," which describes life among the Home Workers of London. That is near the middle of his book. Turn towards the end and you find him watching the Peace Celebrations without the slightest inkling of their significance.

LEWIS HORROX

TWO NOVELS.

The Heavenly Ladder. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)

The Presence and the Power. By MARJORIE BOWEN. (Ward & Lock. 7s. 6d.)

Few, who are not interested in particular religious controversy and the tendencies of Anglo-Catholicism, can have followed through two preceding volumes, with any increasing excitement, the perplexed soul of the Reverend Mark Lidderdale. Since salvation is presumably best achieved in fear and trembling, the process, when described externally, cannot in fiction appear other than unheroic. The acute self-expression of a Huysmans is evident; the actual aim of Mr. Mackenzie is bewildering. But for the fact that one hears the constant grinding of an axe throughout this novel that only those under the rose can see, it might be mistaken for an excellent human comedy, a satire on rash zeal and the paradox that martyrs are dependent on the wicked. The record is simple: Mark, on being transferred to a remote parish in Cornwall, introduces, without preliminary explanations, full-blown Ritualism, and draws upon himself the resentment of his parishioners. He concentrates on the children; the details of Sunday School work might have been taken from any Parish Magazine and its inevitable subscription list. Details of petty persecution, foul slander, and actual violence are documented with a care and vividness that suggest actual events, and with a meticulous conscientiousness that might do credit to a lady relating scandal over neglected tea-cups. Mark's lack of tact and his actual stupidity in human affairs alienate sympathy. Mr. Mackenzie's power of summarizing a character in a brilliant phrase remains, but his humour in the description of the old maid who pursues the unhappy Mark through most of the chapters betrays him into obvious caricature. In one scene Mark just misses being a lonely, tragic figure. As it is, the spiritual values of the book are as undetermined as the human, for Mark's entrance into the Roman Catholic Church is dismissed in a few concluding pages.

Miss Bowen works out, through a generation, the fine and true idea that nature makes always for strength and light. Raulyn Dypres, the degenerate heir of an old country family, in the 'eighties runs away from a pre-ordained marriage with Philippa Myniott—for the families had inter-

married for generations—and so breaks his father's conservative heart. Weak and irresolute—in fact, an irritating bore—he elopes with a beautiful Italian Countess, and finds too late that she is a homicidal maniac. Their child, carefully trained by a doctor, grows to splendid manhood. Philippa, now married, dreams of uniting the families once more, but her daughter, although in love with the younger Dypres, rejects him because, as a cosmopolitan, he is averse to settling down as a country squire. The moral of all this remains obscure. Intentionally or not, Miss Bowen seems to have caught a mixture of emotionalism, theatricality, and idealism that was more fashionable in the period of which she writes than to-day.

AUSTIN CLARKE.

A CRICKETER'S LIFE.

My Cricket Memories. By J. B. HOBBS. With a Foreword by P. G. H. FENDER. (Heinemann. 6s.)

It is one of the penalties of greatness that greatness can have to say of itself very little that is new. Lesser men have striven too consistently to increase their stature in its reflection. And now that J. B. Hobbs, for the last thirteen years England's greatest batsman, has come to write his reminiscences we find that he has very little to tell us that we did not already know. So many people have written about Hobbs; every innings that he has played has been described from so many different angles. It is interesting, of course, to read of his early days and to learn that Essex had and refused an opportunity of including him upon its ground staff. And there are occasional curiously revealing flashes, as when he said of his 187 in the third Test Match of 1912 (though in this book he does not repeat the statement) that he found it rather boring to bat all day without taking risks. But for the most part the story of Hobbs's actual performances is so familiar as to be no more than quietly enjoyable.

And so it is that by far the most interesting portions of this book are those that deal with the intimate side of the professional cricketer's life.

The professional cricketer is, as the actress and the dancer and the treader, an entertainer simply; a man whose appeal depends very largely upon the qualities of youth, of novelty, of freshness. For most men the years between forty-five and sixty are the most productive and the most prosperous. But by forty-five most cricketers are beginning to be back numbers. The cricketer has somehow, during his years of fortune, to entrench himself against the difficult time that lies ahead of him, and it is not easy for him to save money. Salaries must be based on the law of supply and demand, and the profits on first-class cricket are not large. Indeed, it is doubtful whether in any other walk of life it is possible for a man to be at the head of his profession and make less money. Poetry and cricket are, indeed, the two worst-paid callings in the world. No one would do either were it not for a sheer love of the thing for its own sake.

Hobbs is, for example, in his own sphere as magnetic a personality as Carpentier is in his. But Hobbs has never been more than quietly well off. Of 1914, when he was at the very height of his powers, he writes: "I was just thirty-two, married, with four young children; I had a widowed mother, towards whom I had certain obligations, and my financial position left room for improvement." He has had always to consider the future. He has been extremely careful of his health, realizing that his health is his livelihood. He never drinks anything but ginger-ale or ginger-beer at lunch. He does not smoke cigarettes. He goes to bed early, and anyone who has watched him closely at the wickets and in the field must have seen to what extent he spares himself. Hobbs is a man who has faced and accepted the principle of the cricketer's career. He knows how quickly the old idol is forgotten. He will play cricket as long as he is able. Then he will fall back on business. The majority of professionals have in view the post of coach at a public school. But the fortunes of such opportunities are problematic, and Hobbs, in the autumn of 1919, decided to refuse a number of invitations to go to South Africa as a coach, and open instead his very excellent athletic outfitters in Fleet Street.

The chapter headed "How Professionals Live" is quite the most entertaining in the book. It says a great many

things—that never have been said before. Who, for instance, would have expected that Lord's is, or was, a most unpopular ground for professionals? "There is nowhere," Hobbs writes, "to sit and watch the cricket. The lunch was always one of the worst in England till 1922, when they took us up to lunch with the amateurs, and it turned from about the worst to about the best." But from the point of view of real autobiography and personal confessions there is here nothing more remarkable than Hobbs's statement of his own attitude towards the crowd. There is a tendency always for the artist to despise the public that supplies him with his livelihood, and many cricket journalists write of the crowd as though cricket were not a spectacle financed by the public for the public's entertainment, as though the man who has paid his shilling has not the right to complain if he is not satisfied with his amusement. Hobbs never makes this mistake. He acknowledges and accepts his obligation. "When the match is evidently bound to result in a draw," he writes, "then is the time to remember the members and other spectators and to give them something to cheer about. I myself am temperamental; the enthusiasm of the crowds always draws a response from me. Many a time I have thrown away my wicket in order to give the spectators bright cricket."

That, with all that it implies, is a very brave admission. Would that some writers were so honest!

ALEC WAUGH.

ANDREWS OF ACKWORTH.

Frederick Andrews of Ackworth. By ISAAC HENRY WALLIS. (Longmans. 8s. 6d.)

"He was certainly the biggest man I have ever met or am likely to." So writes an old Ackworth boy of Frederick Andrews. To all who come of Quaker kin, the name of Ackworth is rich in associations. For nearly 150 years, the school—the oldest and largest of those belonging to the Society of Friends—has played no small part in moulding the character of a community whose influence on English life has been altogether disproportionate to their numerical strength. On these grounds alone the life of one who ruled as headmaster for forty-three years, 1877-1920, may claim attention from a wider circle than that provided by the piety of old scholars; but the biographies of many men who have filled more important posts make dull reading, and the main interest of Mr. Wallis's delightful book lies not in the position but in the character of his hero.

Andrews, Mr. Wallis tells us, cared little for educational theory and was not much interested in recent pedagogy; but "he read carefully, and quoted often the biographies of other Headmasters," especially those of Arnold of Rugby and Thring of Uppingham. It was the human element in education, the personal relation between teacher and taught, to which he attached special significance, and the claim that he himself was "a great headmaster" rests not so much on the reforms he initiated or sanctioned, as on his sympathy with youth, his enthusiasm for his work, and his power of communicating that enthusiasm to his colleagues and his scholars. It was "the sunshine and warmth of that genial and buoyant personality" that they treasured as the great inspiration of their lives. It is this that Mr. Wallis has striven, above all, to make us realize.

It may be said at once that he has succeeded. He writes simply and directly, with an abundance of well-chosen anecdote and personal reminiscence, and weaves skilfully into his narrative the recollections of others. His tone is that of a man talking, round the fire, over his own school-days, and he makes us feel the mingled strength and sweetness that marked the character of Frederick Andrews because he himself felt it so deeply.

It adds to the effect of his picture that he makes no attempt to claim for his hero an incredible and uninteresting perfection. He shows him as a little priggish when he first took charge, a little too easy-going in later days; limited, intellectually, in many directions—yet earning to an unusual extent both the love and the respect of those who were brought into contact with him.

A schoolmaster who loved teaching, a Quaker whose sincere, simple faith was the mainspring of his life, Andrews

was singularly free from either academic or sectarian narrowness. His interests and activities covered a wide range. A stalwart of Yorkshire Liberalism, a magistrate, a temperance worker, a popular lecturer, a cricketer who could score freely from Tom Emmett and Allen Hill, he worked and played with equal vigour, and owed much of his influence to his own rich enjoyment of life and its opportunities. His prowess at all games and his strikingly handsome presence made him a hero to boys. His laughter was so infectious that his friends would cherish a joke for weeks in order to provoke it.

In Mr. Wallis's introductory sketch of the early history of Ackworth, and in his account of the school during his hero's long association with it as pupil, teacher, and head, there are many vivid pictures of school life from the eighteenth century to the present day; he throws light on many aspects of educational progress; he tells many capital stories, and quotes some of the best genuine "howlers" we have ever read; but always it is the figure of "F. A.," as the school loved to call him, who dominates the scene. Whether he is telling the story of Waterloo so vividly that "the scholars found themselves looking at the class-room door for the first sign of Blucher's men"; or "rolling out" Speaker Lenthall's defence of the privileges of Parliament; or cracking jokes over the gooseberry turnovers at the Essay Society's excursion; or touching with simple, manly earnestness the graver issues of life, we get the same impression of an eager, vital, joyous personality that never became overpowering because of the tact and sympathy springing from real goodness of heart. "He created in the minds of thousands of girls and boys a standard of truth, service, and ambition" that led some of his pupils to the trenches and some to prison, and he could sympathize with both.

Mr. Wallis has been happy in his subject. It is his great merit that he does not merely tell us what manner of man Frederick Andrews was, but makes him live before us.

HOME FROM THE HILL.

Man and Mystery in Asia. By FERDINAND OSSENDOWSKI. (Arnold. 14s.)

The Romance of Plant Hunting. By Captain F. KINGDON WARD. (Arnold. 12s. 6d.)

A Consul in the East. By A. C. WRATISLAW. (Blackwood. 15s.)

BEING one of the insignificant minority who had not read "Beasts, Men, and Gods," I came to its successor with no more serious rival to detachment than curiosity. Why was the former volume such a thundering success? The answer, I fancy, is supplied by the minor Elizabethan tragedy and the romances of Monk Lewis, and the only essential difference between them and M. Ossendowski's present volume is that his is a record of things that have been and probably still are happening in the actual world. The author, too, is a hardy and adventurous spirit with an eye for dramatic narrative, so that with material so varied, surprising, and burningly curried what is not surprising is that he has swept the board with it. Yet I very much doubt whether M. Ossendowski's books will be so popular next year as they are now. Few of us read Tourneur and Kyd to-day. "Man and Mystery in Asia" is the picture of a maniacal world, in which the variety of incident is only superficial. The setting changes swiftly from the banks of the Yenesei River to the convict island of Sakhalin, and from the Steppe country at the foot of the Altai mountains to the Ussurian forest between Vladivostok and the Korean frontier. But in the dramas themselves, and the beings who act them, there is the sameness of torture, horror, and blood. The author tells us little or nothing of his scientific work in the location of oil and mineral deposits for the Russian Government, and as his only respite from observing the ensanguined criminality of Asiatic man appears to have been in the slaughter of wild animals and birds, we have to sail along his river of blood whether we will or no. In fact, only twice are we allowed to land. The tale of the partridge chicks who were brought up in the farmyard, of how when "one little partridge got into a fight, all the others immediately came to the rescue," and of how they all eventually dis-

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THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT of THE NATION & ATHENÆUM EVIDENTLY BELIEVES THAT THE PUBLICATIONS OF THIS HOUSE HAVE A SPECIAL APPEAL FOR THEIR READERS. ALREADY THIS YEAR SOME TWENTY-FIVE JONATHAN CAPE BOOKS HAVE BEEN REVIEWED IN THIS PAPER: A RECORD, WE BELIEVE

These are the books already noticed in the order in which the reviews appeared

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appeared into freedom by scratching holes under the fence, that is our respite. Then there was the author's setter who could not understand "the pleasure of shooting animals." For the rest it is murder, murder all the way, Kirghiz or Tartar against himself and Ukrainian colonist against him, convict against official, official against convict, every type and manner of man against every other, for sport, for revenge, for despair, for gain or love of cruelty, until one gets the impression that the impingement of the West upon the East has thrown half a continent into insanity and dissolution. Nor can we find anything or anybody, whether individual, party or race, townsman or villager, Tsarist or Bolshevik, victim or oppressor, one side or the other, who or which can be said to possess a superior humanity to his or their or its adversary, and do not share impartially and lavishly in the general dementia. It is a hopeless world, a dreadful book, and the last hope of the reader is that the book is not the measure of the world quite so completely as it appears.

For the lay reader to miss no pages of an expert's book is a pretty searching and triumphant test for the latter. That was my experience of Captain Ward's volume, though not one of the plants from the Yunnan and Szechwan uplands he describes so vividly have I ever seen, though I have a prejudice against the rhododendron he loves, and though the rifling of flowers from their native haunts as a commercial enterprise and to deck the Chelsea flower-show is a pursuit that leaves me cold. The reason for this lay interest is that the author is something more than a professional plant-collector, and for the sake of that little more (and how much it is!) one pays slight heed to the occasional testiness, viewiness, and mannerisms of style and thought that accompany it. In fact, Captain Ward has misnamed his book; he is a seeker rather than a hunter, and flowers are more to him than potential items in a nurseryman's catalogue. His imagination, power of robust, sometimes over-robust, expression, and keen critical and geographical sense are able to shed a light over what might have been a very dull business for the reader, the enumeration in a bastard nomenclature of Alpines suitable for transplantation into English rock-gardens. In fact, it has been rather a good thing for Captain Ward that he has been tied to a particular job. His originality is not a little vagrant, and he leads off with disconcerting whirling movements of his snickersnee. But when he gets down to the matter in hand, then his profusely flowering mind adapts itself to the proper conditions of environment, and we are free of such absurdities as "What could be more dishonest than the bee orchis, more dowdy than the dead-nettle, more mean than the common groundsel?" One cannot tell from reading the book whether plant-collecting abroad exposes the species collected to any risk of extermination, and the author ought not to have avoided this issue. For he is not at all the kind of man who would countenance the cutting down of an entire woodland to capture a single rare orchis.

Mr. Wratislaw describes his experiences in the consular service in Constantinople, Bulgaria, Persia, Basra and other places, and that said there is no more to say. The book is true to type.

H. J. MASSINGHAM.

THE MARVEL OF SELENIUM.

The Moon Element: an Introduction to the Wonders of Selenium. By E. E. FOURNIER d'ALBE, D.Sc., F.Inst.P. (Fisher Unwin. 10s. 6d.)

AMONG the infinitesimal planetary systems known as "elements" there are many more important than selenium, but none more interesting; and Dr. Fournier d'Albe's story of its discovery, investigation, and utilization is full of romance. The Swedish chemist Berzelius, who discovered it about a hundred years ago, called it "selenium" on the analogy of "tellurium," because when burned it had an odour of rotten radishes, resembling the smell of the latter element, and for fifty years it signified little more than a bad smell. But in 1873 Mr. Willoughby Smith discovered that light increased its electrical conductivity in a most remarkable way, and at once the moon-element became famous. For not only did the strange phenomenon demand explanation, it also offered opportunities for the ingenuity of the practical electrician.

The explanation propounded by Dr. Fournier d'Albe is quite a drama of the invisible. "The gentle moon that nothing doth but shine moves all the labouring surges of the world"; and the tiny waves of solar light breaking silently on the selenium achieve miracles as mysterious.

According to modern science, each atom consists of a specific number of electrons (particles of negative electricity) incorporate in and revolving round a positively charged nucleus. Hydrogen has only one electron, helium has two, carbon ten, uranium ninety-two, and so on. Selenium has its own specific number, thirty-four. Now some of the electrons revolving around the central nucleus of certain elements are easily shaken off by chemical, electrical, and thermal means; and in the case of selenium it would seem that even light suffices to detach electrons, and that the detached electrons act as carriers of electricity, and thus increase the conductivity of the metal. A candle shining on a selenium tablet at a distance of three feet has enough energy to detach electrons from four hundred million atoms per second. So sensitive to light is selenium that Dr. Fournier d'Albe asserts that if anyone were to strike a match on the moon selenium would detect the fact within one second. It is an interesting and dramatic picture.

Not less interesting and dramatic have been the practical applications of this solar sensitivity. In 1880 the great genius Graham Bell invented the photophone, an instrument translating into vibrations and sound fluctuations in the conductivity of selenium caused by variations in light, and since that date applications of selenium have been about as numerous as the children of Selene.

The photophone led, naturally, to the optophone of Dr. Fournier d'Albe and Professor Barr, and the story of its evolution and perfection makes the most fascinating chapter in a fascinating book. The principle of the instrument is simple. Light falling on selenium is variously qualified by interposed letters, and thus the conductivity of the selenium varies with the letter. The fluctuating electrical current is transformed in the usual manner into vibrations and sounds, and a listener learns to associate sound and letter. The sound is said to be soft and pleasant, like the notes of a banjo floating across water. So we have words and thoughts translated into music, and any book in any language can be so translated simply by passing the pages over the selenium.

The ingenuity of the instrument and the beauty of the idea are beyond dispute. A blind lady, Miss Jameson, has read by the optophone at the rate of eighty words a minute, and has perused whole books from cover to cover, identifying whole words and phrases by the note produced. Possibly the optophone is not so easy to learn as the Braille system; but it has obvious advantages.

Another very interesting chapter of the book describes Mr. Grindell Matthews's experiments in steering a torpedo-boat by means of a searchlight beam directed on selenium apparatus, and in exploding a mine in the same manner. These are only a few of the applications described, and Dr. Fournier d'Albe prophesies that selenium has still many marvels to reveal to coming generations.

The book is more than a scientific treatise: it is a revelation and a prophecy, and may be read with profit by all men who take an interest in the world in which they live.

RONALD CAMPBELL MACFIE.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

Croatan. By MARY JOHNSTON. (Thornton Butterworth. 7s. 6d.)

The true spirit of romance fills Miss Mary Johnston's "Croatan." She has written bigger and more ambitious books than this, but none that is more charming. With the lightest of touches the historical background is sketched in, while the handling of the time scheme (always difficult) is particularly happy. We watch the sailing of the ships sent out from Plymouth by Raleigh, the arrival at Virginia of the little band of colonists, their first troubles, the passage of years—years that lead up to the drama of the stealing of Virginia Dare by the Shawanese—years devoted to the search for her by the three youths (English, Spanish, and Indian), Miles Darling, Ruy Valdez, and Young Thunder. Behind this tale, which is exciting and chivalrous, yet perfectly human and natural, there is the vivid picture

of the founding of Croatan, of the life there, when red men and white lived amicably together. The novel shows Miss Johnston at her best. The blend of history and adventure is perfectly achieved, and the whole thing lives, is touched at times with a sort of primitive wildness and beauty, particularly in the snow scenes on the river, and the long journey through the forest. It is a good book, without a flat or a dull page.

Lucky in Love. By BERTA RUCK. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)

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NIGHTLY, at 8. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.15.
BARRY V. JACKSON presents
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Melodrama, "THE WHIP" starring PAUL McALISTER; DINKY
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HERBERT RAWLINSON in "THE VICTOR"; HAROLD LLOYD
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NIGHTLY, at 8. MATS., THURS. & SAT., at 2.15.
DIPLOMACY (100th performance
Thurs., June 5.)
GLADYS COOPER. OWEN NARES.
Dawson Milward, Norman Forbes, Boris Ranevsky.
Lady Tree, Irene Browne, Anne Schletter.
Seats booked at this Theatre for Gaiety and Apollo.

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Adjoining Sloane Sq. Stn. (Ger. 848.)

NIGHTLY, at 8.15. MATS., THURS. & SAT., at 2.15.
THE BIRMINGHAM REPERTORY THEATRE CO. in
THE FARMER'S WIFE.
A Comedy by EDEN PHILLIPOTS.
"A feast of fun . . . admirably acted. The reception was
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Imaginative paintings and drawings by
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37a, George St., Hanover Sq., Admission 1/3.

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PINEHURST, CROWBOROUGH (SUSSEX). Country School for Girls.

On edge of Moorlands. Junior and Senior Houses; ages, 9—18.
Illustrated Prospectus on application.
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Principal: Miss STANSFELD.

Students are trained in this College to become Teachers of
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The Secretary, 37, Lansdowne-road, Bedford.

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Entire charge if desired. For Prospectus apply the Principal.

S.T. MARGARET'S SCHOOL, BUXTUD, SUSSEX.—For girls
7 to 18 (Dalton plan). Fees from 13 to 25 guineas termly.
Sole charge, £100 per annum (inclusive) Prospectus, Sister-in-
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WOODARD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS. Fees £150.
Apply Miss B. A. WARD, B.Sc., Lady Warden.

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P. Lee Michell, Esq., Clerk to the Governors.

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PITMAN'S SHORTHAND 20 Lessons, 20/-. Pay 1/- down
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BOOKKEEPING & ACCOUNTS. 42 Lessons 44/-. Pay 4/- down,
4/- on receipt, and 4/- monthly. Original Postal Tuition.
Send P.O. for complete notes. Satisfaction assured.
W. DOUTHWAITE, F.C.I., Howden, B. Yorks. Shorthand Winner, 2nd place,
1923, Newport Welsh Eisteddfod.
YOUR Opportunity. Start to-day. To-morrow may be too late.

OWING TO PRESSURE ON OUR SPACE,
WE REGRET CERTAIN ADVERTISE-
MENTS HAVE HAD TO BE OMITTED
FROM THIS ISSUE.

APPOINTMENTS VACANT AND WANTED.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE.

COLEG PRIFATHROFAOL DEHEUDIR CYMRU A MYNWY.
THE COUNCIL of the College invites applications for the
post of ASSISTANT LECTURER in English Language and
Literature. Salary £300 per annum.
Further particulars regarding the post may be obtained from the
undersigned, by whom applications, with testimonials (which need
not be printed), must be received on or before June 20th, 1924.
D. J. A. BROWN, Registrar.
University College,
Cardiff.
May 21st, 1924.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD. LECTURESHIP IN MODERN HISTORY.

THE COUNCIL are about to appoint a LECTURER in
MODERN HISTORY. Salary £300 per annum. Further particulars
may be obtained from the undersigned, with whom applications
should be lodged by June 7th.
W. M. GIBBONS, Registrar.

A HEADMISTRESS is required for the Government Girls'
School, Accra, Gold Coast. Candidates, who should be not more
than 32 years of age, should be Trained Teachers, with experience
of Infant School work and Domestic Science teaching. Ability to
play games and knowledge of Girl Guide work desirable. Duties to
consist more in training of teachers than in actual class teaching.
Salary, £480 per annum for first three years, thence £510, rising by
annual increments of £30 to £720 per annum. Free quarters and
medical attendance and first-class passage to the Gold Coast provided.
Applications and inquiries should be addressed in covers marked
"C. A." to the Secretary, Board of Education, Whitehall, London,
S.W.1. Scottish candidates should apply to the Secretary, Scottish
Education Department, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

TOTTENHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL. SENIOR LIBRARY ASSISTANT (Male).

THE LIBRARIES COMMITTEE invite applications for the
position of Senior Assistant (Male) at their Libraries, at a
salary of £155 per annum (rising by £15 to £170), plus the appropriate
bonus, which at the present time amounts to £36 11s., making a
total of £251 11s.

Candidates must have had Public Library experience, and possess
certificates in Cataloguing and Classification. Applicants should give
the following particulars:—Age, present and previous Appointments,
also details of experience and qualifications. Applications, which
should be in the Candidate's own handwriting accompanied by copies
of not more than three recent testimonials (which will not be
returned), must be delivered to me not later than 12 noon on
June 14th, 1924. Canvassing is forbidden and will disqualify.
Dated this 26th day of May, 1924.

REGINALD C. GRAVES,

Clerk and Solicitor of the Council.
Solicitor's Department,
Town Hall, Tottenham, N.15.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

FORTHCOMING EXAMINATION: Male Cartographer in
the Hydrographic Department of the Admiralty (1925, with
extension in certain cases), July 10th.

The date specified is the latest on which applications can be
received. They must be made on forms to be obtained, with
particulars, from The Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Burlington
Gardens, London, W.1.

THE EDGBASTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, LTD., BIRMINGHAM.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the appointment of HEAD
MISTRESS. The successful candidate will be asked to take up
her duties at the beginning of the AUTUMN TERM, 1924. Applications
should be addressed to the undersigned, from whom further
particulars may be obtained, before June 11th.

H. KEELING, Secretary,
109, Colmore Row,
Birmingham.

S.T. MARY'S COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM,
Senior Tutor (Woman) required. Graduate in Honours (English),
£250, resident.—For further particulars address: The Principal,
St. Mary's College, Durham.

PARTNER desired, active, with capital, for the development
of Bookseller's business, scientific and literary (mostly foreign).
Excellent connections with important Libraries in England and abroad.
Business is suitable for great extension. Owner would like to retire
at a later period.—Write Box N.A. 400, THE NATION AND THE ATHENÆUM,
5, John-street, Adelphi, W.C.2.

PUBLIC NOTICES.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A COURSE of Three Lectures on "L'ARCHEOLOGIE
DE SYRIE" will be given (in French) by Monsieur FRANZ
CUMONT (Member of the Royal Academy of Belgium and Correspond-
ing Fellow of the British Academy), at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1), on THURSDAY, JUNE 12th; FRIDAY,
JUNE 13th; and MONDAY, JUNE 16th, 1924, at 5.30 p.m. At the First
Lecture the Chair will be taken by EDWYN BEVAN, Esq., O.B.E., M.A.
A Syllabus of the Lecture may be obtained from the undersigned.
ADMISSION FREE, WITHOUT TICKET.

EDWIN DELLER, Academic Registrar.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON SCHOOL OF LIBRARIANSHIP.

A SUMMER VACATION SCHOOL for Librarians, Library
Assistants, Teachers, Conductors of Reading Circles, &c., will be
held at Brussels from July 14th to 26th, 1924. Courses will be given
in recent English and French Literature, Bibliography, Archives, &c.
Visits will be made to Libraries, Galleries, other cities, &c.

For particulars and entry-forms apply to
WALTER W. SETON,
Secretary,
University College, London.
(Gower Street, W.C.1.)

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